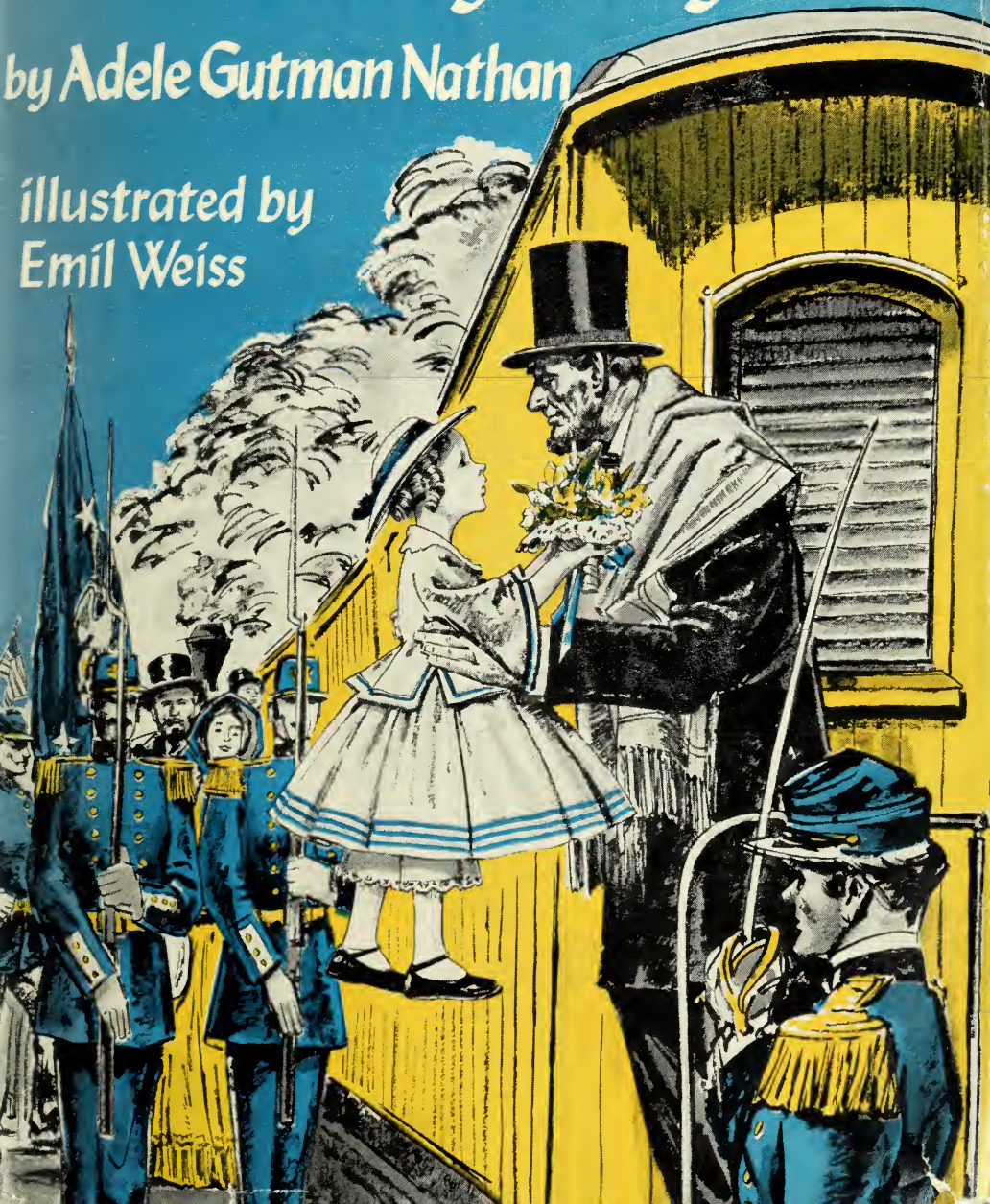
When Lincoln Went To Gettysburg

by Adele Gutman Nathan

illustrated by Emil Weiss



$2.75

Ten-year-old youngsters can read this for themselves. Younger listeners will enjoy having it read to them.

WHEN LINCOLN WENT TO GETTYSBURG

by ADELE GUTMAN NATHAN

***Illustrated* by Emil Weiss**

Captain Eckert, the conductor on the local train that ran between Hanover Junction and the little town of Gettysburg always took his responsibilities seriously, but he didn't know—and none of his fellow townspeople knew — that on November 18, 1863, he was making history.

Gettysburg had been the scene of a bloody battle. It had hardly recovered before it was called on to prepare for the arrival of important visitors, come to dedicate, as a national cemetery, the burial place of the dead soldiers. Important people were coming—generals, cabinet members, and a famous orator. Then came the news that the President of the United States was coming to attend the ceremonies.

What happened on Captain Eckert's train and afterward—what Abraham Lincoln said and did, has been told many times, but never so vividly or with such rich detail. The reader feels he knows intimately all the people mentioned and shares with them the excitement, as well as the solemnity of this historic occasion. When LINCOLN WENT TO GETTYSBURG is historical fiction at its best.

LINCOLN ROOM

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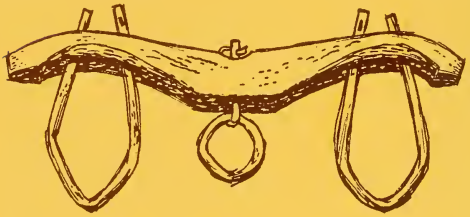

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When Lincoln Went To Gettysburg

by Adele Gutman Nathan

Illustrated by Emil Weiss

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New York: 1955

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to
the boys and girls of America
who know and love the Gettysburg Address,
but especially to the great-grandchildren—
wherever they are—of the
Captain of the train that took
Mr. Lincoln to Gettysburg.

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Contents

Up Train to Gettysburg	3
A Telegram	25
The House on the Diamond	39
The Captain Takes Command	57
The Kitchen	66
Orders	80
Hanover Junction	93
White Flag Special	106
The President's Car	120
The Arrival	129
Jeers and Jubilees	139
Nothing to Say	157
Parade	166
The Station Bell	181
The Watch	200
Gettysburg Address	217
Acknowledgment	218

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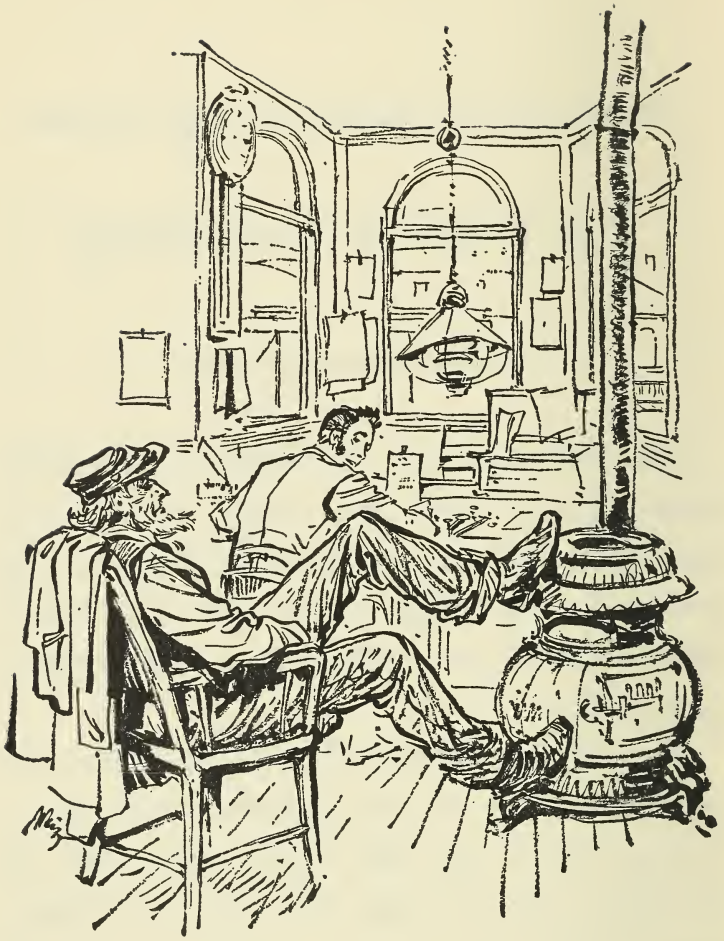
Up Train to Gettysburg

Mr. Philo Swisher sat dozing in the ticket office of the Gettysburg depot. It was just past noon and the sun, beating down on the red roof, was bright and warm. The ticket office, with all the windows shut, was comfortably stuffy.

Mr. Swisher had tilted back his chair and put his feet up on the potbellied iron stove. There wasn't any fire in the stove, for although it was already the end of October, there hadn't been even a light frost in the little bowl of a valley, in which the town lay. A couple of times there had been a morning frost on the mountains all around, but that



was all. Mr. Swisher sat by the stove just from habit.

After a few minutes he opened one eye and looked at the big clock hanging on the wall. He shifted his quid of tobacco, opened his other eye and took aim. He spat neatly into the hole on the top of the open stove. Then he spoke to Weinbrenner, the Morse man, who was sitting hunched over the telegraph instrument in the bay window.

"Anything from the Up train yet?" asked Mr. Swisher.

"Ought to be coming in any time now," said the telegrapher. "Got a call from Valley Junction a good twenty minutes back saying she was just pulling out."

It was only seventeen miles from Valley Junction, but it was a slow run. The railroad came across land belonging to farmers. When a railway company laid rails on private property, the owners reserved the right to flag down the trains whenever they wanted to. It was like that almost all the way in from Hanover Junction, at the other end of the

line. Farmers, and farm women and children, and hired hands were always stopping the trains to get on or get off, or to put on some freight, or ask the conductor to carry a message to someone further up the line.

It made it hard to figure out the schedule. The locomotive on this Mixed Daily was supposed to be able to make forty miles an hour. But there wasn't much chance of the driver chalking up any speed records on *this* stretch of the Iron Pike.

The telegraph began clicking.

"There it is now," said Weinbrenner.

Mr. Swisher took his feet off the stove, one at a time, and eased his chair back onto its four legs.

"Guess I'd better go up," he said.

He ambled to the door, out into the narrow little hall behind, then slowly mounted the steps to the Tower.

This was "Regulations." A station agent was supposed to ring the bell up there five minutes before the arrival and departure of every train, and so warn the citizenry that

there was a train coming in or about to leave the station.

Mr. Swisher rather resented having to drag himself up those two flights, four times a day. The whole population of Gettysburg knew without any bell ringing what was going on down at the depot, and when there was going to be any excitement.

Up in the tower, Mr. Swisher took a good look around out of the windows. He could see over the roofs of the warehouses and the feed stores and the furniture factory that clustered around the tracks. Sure enough, people were beginning to come out of the houses and were already walking down the streets in the direction of the station.

After he took a good look toward the town, he turned his eyes in the other direction. Over East, beyond the bend, he could see smoke. The train was coming.

The station agent spat on his hands and took hold of the bell rope, and started pulling.

"Clang, clang, clang," went the bell.

After a couple of minutes Mr. Swisher dropped the rope and leaned on the sill of the window facing down track. Now the engine was coming round the curve—bell ringing, whistle blowing. She was a nice green engine with a diamond smokestack, a 4—2—0. That meant she had four small wheels on her bogie, and two big driving wheels. She was so close now that Mr. Swisher could make out the yellow and gold decorations on the wheels and the outside of the cab.

There were two bright pumpkin yellow cars; the first was a passenger coach, and the second was a combination, half passenger and half baggage.

Mr. Swisher could see the fireman leaning out of the left-hand window of the cab, his right arm moving as he pulled the whistle cord. The train came ringing and whistling through the town. Captain John Eckert, the conductor, was standing on the steps of the platform of the first car, giving the engine driver the "slow down" for the depot.

Mr. Swisher decided it was time to get down to the station and meet the train.

He got there just as the locomotive was coasting to a stop and Mr. Eckert was swinging off the car steps, onto the platform.

"Good evening, Captain," said Mr. Swisher.

Mr. Eckert didn't answer right off. The first thing he did when his feet hit solid ground was to take out his big watch, spring open the lid, and look at it. Then he closed it with a snap.

"On time," he said—and dropped the watch back into his vest pocket.

This was always the first thing that Captain Eckert said when he hit the platform at Gettysburg. Swisher looked at his own watch and nodded.

They were two very different people—the station agent and the conductor. Mr. Swisher, who was well past middle age, had a big bushy white beard. He had on an old pair of pants and on this warm day, he was coatless. His vest hung open and you could see

his galluses. He wore a battered little cap with a visor, very much like a soldier's kepi. He'd been at the Gettysburg depot for a good many years now. He had bought a little farm out back of town beyond Culp's Hill, off the Baltimore road, against his retirement.

Swisher had been here in the station right through the three-day Battle of Gettysburg. He'd been there before the battle, and he stayed right on when the Union Army took over the railroad. The only difference the battle had made to him was that he hadn't been able to get out home for the two days and nights. The battle hadn't gotten over to his side of the town until well into the second day.

Like most of the people of Gettysburg, he hadn't thought very much about the war until the armies were right there fighting. His apple orchards were doing well and he'd put in peaches in the spring. The question of whether the South had its own government or whether the slaves were freed, never was real to him. He just wanted to be let alone

to run his railroad station and build up his little farm, and he didn't see why the Johnny Rebs shouldn't be allowed to manage their business the way they wanted to.

His whole life centered around Gettysburg and the people whom he knew so well. When some of the sons of his friends went off to the war, he helped them onto the train with their equipment the same as he would do for anybody. As far as he was concerned, they were just youngsters wanting excitement. When the Confederates came swarming into town, they didn't look so different to him. He felt he could get along with them, too. Of course, he was glad when they were beaten back, and he wished the war were over, so all those boys he knew wouldn't have to be killed.

After the battle, he helped the Union wounded and the Rebs alike, when they came limping into the railroad station. That was his job. He was always helping people—old ladies who were getting on trains to visit their families along the line—children who were going to spend some time with their grandparents—

wedding couples who were leaving for the big city on their honeymoons. This meant more to him than the war or any of the things that he thought of as happening in Washington. He let the politicians look out for that.

It made him smile to see the earnestness with which John Eckert tried to keep his schedule. What was a minute or two in a lifetime, in a quiet little corner like Gettysburg, that was only a spur at the end of a line?

The respect with which John Eckert looked on his job was reflected in his whole behavior. He was dressed absolutely according to the book, just as though he were pulling into a station in Baltimore, or Washington, or any big city.

He was clean-shaven except for sideburns. He had on a tail coat, and neat black trousers, which hardly wrinkled over the tops of his shiny high shoes. He wore a regulation top hat. Around its crown was a metal chain which sparkled like silver—the little chain which held on the badge with the word "Conductor" imprinted in black. His high white

collar and his cuffs were stiff as starch could make them, and when he opened his coat to take out his watch, the big silver chain across his sombre vest, had the same sparkle as his hat gear.

It was a wonder to Swisher that he kept himself so neat with all the luggage he had to handle, and all the boxes and crates that came in along the line, besides all the cleaning up that he helped the brakemen and the engineers do in the trains.

John had been the conductor of the Up train for only a couple of months—after the real excitement of the battle had died down. Before that, he had been a brakeman on the line that ran to Union Hill.

He had come to Gettysburg after old Greis had been retired and gone to live on his farm over Flora Dale way. Poor Greis had been terribly shaken up by the battle, but then, that was not surprising, as two of his sons were in the Union Army, somewhere off in the West. Many a time he and Swisher had come close to having serious rows over the

way they looked at things. Swisher was almost glad when he left, for though the new captain was so very exacting about his train orders, he didn't seem to have cockeyed ideas about politics. In fact, he never mentioned them. His life appeared to be tied up in his job.

Now, having looked at his watch and made sure that he was on time, Eckert went about his business of seeing to his passengers. Swisher went down to the baggage car. The trainmen were already setting out crates of chickens, bags of feed, fine white boards for the furniture factory, and bales of straw and hides. Sorting the baggage was always Swisher's first job. Today, he was in something of a hurry, for he was expecting a freight train in about an hour and he wanted the train crew to get the 12:15 off the main track and up to the siding at the Wye and out of the way, as quickly as possible.

A tall man in a work shirt and overalls, wearing a military hat and high boots, came up to Mr. Eckert. He had a paper in his hand.

"Good afternoon, Captain," he said. "I'm Colonel McDowell from the Sanitary Commission." Mr. Eckert knew he was from New England—nobody in this part of the country said "afternoon."

"Good evening, Colonel," said John. "I've got your men back there in the baggage car. Let me see," and he consulted a paper that he took out of his top hat. "There are 15 of them and a foreman."

"Have they been any trouble to you?" asked the colonel.

"Well, they've been roaring and singing all the way up from Hanover Junction," answered Captain Eckert. "I picked them up there from the Northern Central. But they haven't been any bother."

"That's the Irish for you," said Colonel McDowell. "That's the Irish. They're rough and they're noisy, but they're good workers if you know how to handle them. I had a regiment of them come down to me from New York City when I was at Antietam. They did a good deal of quarreling and made a power-

ful amount of noise, but when there was a job of work or fighting to do, they did it. They'll make good citizens if they ever settle down."

Captain Eckert shook his head, puzzled. He came from steady German stock himself, and he couldn't understand these newcomers. His family had been living in these peaceful hills for many years now. Some of them had been Lutherans, and some of them had been "Plain People," members of the Christian Brotherhood, and they were all very quiet and pious and earnest about their work. But he knew that the English had been against the Germans when they first came over to the states, too. His father had told him about it.

"Takes all kinds of people to make America," he said.

"Well, let's get 'em going," said the colonel. "They're not the kind to keep waiting. They might get into trouble."

Indeed, the men were already jumping out from the baggage car to the platform, stretching their legs and making a big hullabaloo.

The colonel hurried down and took charge.

In just a few minutes, he had them lined up in military fashion and was marching them off toward town.

This wasn't the first gang of Irish that Captain Eckert had brought to Gettysburg. Ever since they had decided to dedicate the new National Cemetery, the Sanitary Commission and the Army Engineer Corps had been busy shipping out what was left of the sick and wounded soldiers so there wouldn't be anyone left around by November 17th, the day of the ceremonies.

And it wasn't only the sick and wounded they had to get out of the way. There were dead horses and cattle lying all over the place, ever since last July. Then, too, there were bodies of men who had been killed in the battle, both Union and Confederate, to be brought from their temporary graves and transferred to the site which had been chosen for the cemetery.

At first, the local workers thought they could take care of all this, but now, as the time for the dedication came nearer, contrac-

tors were shipping in Irish laborers to help with the job.

With the colonel in charge, John Eckert was able to attend to his other duties.

He turned to the men who were standing on the platform, politely waiting until he finished with McDowell.

"Is Strickhauser here?" he asked.

"Nei," said somebody in the crowd, "he ain't here."

"I want somebody to run over to Mrs. Strickhauser's," said the captain. "Britcher flagged me down as I went through his place this morning. His wife's baby is on the way, and he wants his mother-in-law there."

A little boy about twelve shouldered himself forward. "I'll go, Captain Eckert," he said.

Three other little boys tried to horn in.

"All right," said the captain. "Billy offered first, so he'll take the message. You others can go along, if you want." He handed Billy a dime. "Billy, you tell Mrs. Strickhauser to get

ready to go back with me on the Down train. Her daughter wants her."

Billy ran off with his message, the other three little boys tagging behind.

"Let me see," the captain went on. "Where's Fissle?"

A big red-headed farmer came forward.

"Fissle," said John, "go up there in the first car. On the first seat you'll find a basket of kittens. Your mother sent them up for you and your wife."

Fissle started to object.

"Don't gripe," said the captain. "Your kids will be glad to get them, and you can give away the ones you don't want. Your mother's got too many down there on the farm, already. She told me both her tabbies had families."

Muttering to himself, Fissle started off in the direction of the first car.

"Stallsmith," the captain went on, pointing at another man, "there's a sack of planting potatoes for you in that same car. Segal sent 'em and he said you should give me the

money so I can drop it off on my way down.

"Walisdorp, the two little Budemeyer boys are sitting in the last seat waiting for you to come for them. Their mother said they were to spend the day with your two. See that they're back here in time for the Down train. Their Mom wants 'em back in time for supper.

"Raffensberger, there's a clutch of eggs down by the stove, and a chicken tied up—that is, if she ain't got away. I been having bother with her all the way up. She's broody—wantin' to set on the eggs. But I had enough trouble without any chicks being hatched in my car."

The crowd guffawed.

"Mrs. Ziegler gave 'em to me.

"Schlicken, there's a hog in the baggage car, waitin' for you, that I got from Kleinfelder. Take him out quick. He's had more attention than if he was on the Board of Directors. There ain't no invoice for him—I just took him on the way up. I gave Kleinfelder a piece of my mind. He ought to

know by this time that the proper way to ship stock is to box it."

"But it's only a few miles," said Schlicken. "Seems like going to a heap of trouble to box a hog to send it six miles."

"Well, next time you go down on your wagon and get it, if it's such a short way," said Captain Eckert. He really didn't mind, but he wanted the farmers to appreciate what he was doing for them.

"That's all this morning," he said, and he started to turn away.

"What's the news from Washington?" asked one of the men.

"What did the conductor on the Northern Central say?" asked another.

"Nothing much new," said Mr. Eckert. "General Grant's still winning victories in the West, and the Army of the Potomac still has Lee pinned down in Richmond."

"What about the Reverend Everett?" said a voice in the crowd. "He's going to make the oration at the dedication. When's he coming up?"

"I don't know anything about that," said Captain Eckert. "There wasn't anything about him in my orders."

"Maybe he's not coming by train," said Swisher. Swisher had finished taking care of the freight and had joined the group.

"Maybe he's too high class to come in a common train," said another man.

The captain looked to see who had spoken. It was Kneckel, the relief telegrapher. He was just coming on to do his trick to take Weinbrenner's place while the Morse man got his dinner. Captain Eckert was surprised to hear him join in. He couldn't remember ever having heard the operator say anything much before. Kneckel was just coming to work but he looked even sloppier than Swisher—just as though he hadn't even shaved. Captain Eckert didn't like this—he didn't think it showed proper respect for his job. And Kneckel was a young man, too. He'd never get anywhere, John thought.

"The Reverend's got some kind of family near here," said Fissle, who had come back

from the car with the basket of kittens on his arm. "He's coming down to stay with them for a few days before the dedication. They say he wants to get the feel of the place for the proper doing of his oration."

"He's already took two months," said Kneckel, in his rasping voice. "Seems like they put off the dedication once already so he could do that polishing. If it took him that long, what's he going to do in a few days?"

"Well, he's a great orator," said Walisdorp. He didn't seem in any hurry to get the two boys up to his house. They stood behind him patiently, while he stopped to yarn. "It's a great honor to have him here."

Captain Eckert took out his watch.

"You'll have to excuse me, gentlemen," he said. "Looks like my engine driver is ready to pull out. But let me say one thing. Up there in Boston where the Honorable Everett comes from, everybody rides trains the way they do here. I'd be mighty proud to have Mr. Everett on my train."

"I reckon you'd bring him in on time, too," said Swisher, teasing.

"I'd do my best," said the captain. "Good evening, gentlemen."

And he started walking up toward the locomotive.

A Telegram

Gettysburg was a stub end town. The Hanover Branch Railroad ended there.

When Mr. Eckert got up to the end of the line, the engine driver had already taken on wood and water, and was spitting steam getting ready to do the switching that would turn his locomotive in the right direction for the Down trip.

There wasn't room for a Loop track right inside of town, nor did the operations warrant the building of a big expensive turntable. So the switching was done on what railroaders call a "Wye."

A Wye is tracks laid in the shape of the

letter "Y" with another track connecting the two arms. The driver eases the locomotive up one leg, backs onto the crossover, and heads down the other leg. Now he's turned completely around with the locomotive facing in the right direction.

The captain stood on the embankment near the tracks until the engineer had completed this maneuver. As soon as the train was standing still, he mounted the steps and went through the cars.

The two men of the train crew had been cleaning up ever since the train had come up from the station, brushing off the seats, trimming the oil lamps, setting a fire in the stoves, and picking up the papers that the passengers had left lying around. There was an almost new copy of the *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal* on one of the seats, and the captain picked this up and tucked it under his arm. It would make good reading while he was eating his dinner. The rest was just trash.

The captain helped the men while they

got the place swept up and the boxes of refuse deposited on the junk heap at the side of the track.

Now the train was ready for the afternoon trip.

The engineer and the fireman were already sitting in the sun on the embankment with their dinner pails, and as soon as the captain gave his okay, the two brakemen joined them. Captain Eckert had left his lunch basket in the station agent's room next to the telegraph, so instead of sitting down with the rest of the crew he started walking back to the station.

John always went down to the station to eat. It was part of his privilege as the "brains" of the train. It gave him a chance every now and then, to take a little walk up to the Diamond in the middle of town and perhaps even get himself a cup of coffee at the McClelland House. Then he would stroll back to the depot, go over the waybills with Swisher, look over the passengers, and be back at the Wye in plenty of time

to make a last-minute inspection before 2:52, when the Down train was due to start strutting down from the Wye.

By the time Captain Eckert got to the station it was almost empty. All the people who had been hanging around when the Up train came in, had drifted away. Mr. Swisher had gone home to dinner and Weinbrenner had been replaced by Kneckel.

John didn't enjoy the prospect of sitting there in the office eating his dinner while Kneckel was in charge. He didn't care very much for Kneckel and after the fresh way the telegrapher had spoken up today, the captain liked him even less.

He was a sleepy fellow and always sat half dozing over the telegraph instrument. When messages came in he never read them to the captain the way Weinbrenner did. He seemed to take a certain morose satisfaction in keeping the contents secret, hiding them behind his hand as he wrote them down, and sealing them up before Mr. Eckert

could get a glimpse of them, as much as to say, "This is none of your business."

Mr. Eckert, on the other hand, made no effort to get friendly. He didn't know very much about Kneckel, except that he had been in the fighting at the battle and had been wounded. He had come to the telegraph office afterwards, just shortly after Mr. Eckert got his train. Today was really the first time John had ever heard him speak up.

Kneckel was slumped down in his chair in the bay window at the telegraph desk, when John came into the office. He just grunted when the captain greeted him politely.

Mr. Eckert picked up his basket from the shelf under the ticket window, spread out his lunch on the counter, pulled up a stool, sat down, and began eating.

There was no sound in the room except the buzzing of a big left-over summer fly. Mr. Eckert went on eating and Kneckel went on dozing.

The telegraph instrument had been silent, but now, all of a sudden, it began clicking. All the stations up and down the line got their messages over the same wire. The operators hardly paid any attention if they didn't hear their own call letters.

But this message coming in now—this was a local. Captain Eckert knew just enough Morse to recognize the call letters. Kneckel put his hand on the key, tapped out his own signal and the GA (Go Ahead). He did this twice, and got ready to accept.

Now the message started coming in fast. After the first few words a change came over Kneckel. He sat up straight, reached for his pad and pencil, and started writing—jotting down the words as quickly as they came in—in a sort of shorthand that the Morse men called "operator's fist." All of a sudden he pushed back his chair. He gave a sharp whistle. The noise startled Captain Eckert—right in the middle of eating a thick sausage sandwich. He looked over at the telegrapher and was surprised to see him so excited.

Sandwich in hand, Eckert got up and went over into the bay window and stood behind Kneckel's chair. Kneckel didn't even look up. He just kept on writing away like mad. John didn't dare interrupt, though the call was coming in too fast for him to understand. He made up his mind then and there to learn more Morse. Now he'd have to depend on Kneckel to find out what it was all about.

But there was no use standing there, being ignored. He took a turn around the room. Absent-mindedly he laid his sandwich down on top of a crate of chickens. The chickens began pecking away at it, but John had his mind on the message that was coming in and he didn't even notice it. At last the telegraph instrument stopped clicking. Once again Kneckel tapped out an acknowledgment.

There was another short message and then Kneckel began pounding the brass like mad. Evidently he was repeating the telegram. The captain knew procedure well enough to realize that this was done only in messages of great importance, to guard against mis-

takes. What in the world could be happening?

At last Kneckel stopped. There was a short acknowledgment from the other end. Then the instrument was still again.

"Now if Weinbrenner were only here," thought the captain, "he'd tell me what was going on. But this fellow—"

Just as he expected, Kneckel didn't say a word. He reached over and took a blue telegraph blank from the drawer, wet his pencil with his tongue, and started transcribing the message from his pad to the telegram.

Captain Eckert wanted to say something —to ask a question—but he felt it below his dignity to speak first. He didn't want Kneckel to think he was a meddling old gossip. He took a turn around the room again, looking for his sandwich. The chickens had made away with it and there were only three crumbs to show where it had been.

There was nothing for John to do but go back to the ticket desk and start on a fresh sandwich.

Kneckel took a long time writing out the message. When he had finished he folded over the edges of the telegraph blank, sealed it, and put an address on the outside. Still he didn't take the captain into his confidence.

Though Captain Eckert didn't actually look at him he could watch him out of the corner of his eye without turning his head. He saw Kneckel stand up, crane his neck out of the bay window and look up and down the platform. Then he went to the door of the Men's Waiting Room and looked around there.

Finally, he came over to the captain and stood there, scratching his neck with his pencil stub. But now it was Captain Eckert's turn to ignore him so he just went on eating.

Kneckel stopped scratching his neck and rubbed the stubble on his chin. It made kind of a grating noise.

"Ain't a soul around," he said at last.

"I coulda told you that—if ya'd asked me," said Captain Eckert. "Nobody here but you

and me at this time of day." He opened the *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal* and started reading.

Kneckel looked at the envelope in his hand. He seemed to be weighing it. "This here's a mighty important message," he said. "It ought to be delivered right away. Now if you knew Morse—then I could leave you here while I ran up and delivered it."

"Well, I don't know Morse," said Captain Eckert. "I've been too busy running my train to learn." He knew he had the upper hand, but he wasn't going to push his luck too far.

"If only one of the kids was here," said Kneckel. Then he scratched his head again. "All those kids come down here all the time and that bunch of loafers that hang around —but they're never around when you want them!"

Captain Eckert still didn't say anything. He just took a bite out of his sandwich, as though he didn't care.

"Mighty important message," Kneckel went on. "Ought to be delivered right away."

He waited a long minute and when the captain still kept silent, Kneckel broke down.

"It's for Mr. Wills. Mr. David Wills."

Captain Eckert, like everybody else in Gettysburg, knew that Mr. David Wills was the Commissioner of the Celebration Committee. He realized that Kneckel was in a spot. But he made up his mind not to help him out.

"Well, there'll be somebody around here pretty soon," he said, and went right on eating.

"Oughtn't to wait," said Kneckel. "Oughtn't to wait." And then he really became confidential. "You know what this is?" he asked.

Captain Eckert didn't show any interest.

"There's been lots of messages for Mr. Wills," Kneckel went on, ". . . from governors and generals and bigwigs on both sides of the political fence. I don't pay no mind to them. I just give them to Billy or some boy around the depot and let 'em take 'em up. When these fellers say they're coming

or they're not coming to the dedication—it don't make no difference to me. It's just part of a game they play to make themselves look big."

He looked at the message in his hand.

"But this here—this is something different. This here's a message from the President of the United States. This here is a message to Mr. David Wills from the Commander-in-Chief himself. It says he's coming here to be present at the dedication and that he 'will make a few appropriate remarks.' That's what it says. Just think," he went on, "President Lincoln himself will be here."

Captain Eckert had won the skirmish. He'd made Kneckel spell out, word by word, what was in the message.

But all of a sudden his victory didn't seem to be worth anything. Kneckel was so sincere in his feeling for the man in the White House. After all, Kneckel had been around; he'd been in the army and he'd seen other men in authority and hadn't been taken in

by them. John decided it was up to him to get off his high horse, too. He folded up his newspaper and laid it down.

"I'll tell you what, Kneckel," he said. "You know, I wouldn't do this ordinarily, but since it's such an important message, and since it's from the President of the United States, I'll attend to this personally."

The Morse man gave a sigh of relief. "Oh, would you do that, Captain?" he said, almost tearfully. "You know, I wouldn't expect you to do it, but this here's such an important message. . . ."

"That's all right," said Mr. Eckert. "I was going to walk up to the Diamond anyway and stop in at the hotel for a cup of coffee, and Mr. Wills' house is right there. You give me the message. I'll take charge of the matter."

The House on the Diamond

Captain Eckert put the telegram in his hat and started walking toward the center of town. He had decided to do his errand before stopping for his cup of coffee.

Mr. Wills lived in a big, three story, gray brick house on the southeast corner of the Diamond. It was right opposite to the McClelland House and it looked almost as imposing as the hotel. The side door of the house was on the Diamond but the big front door was halfway up York Street, catty-corner to the oldest house in the whole region—the two story fieldstone house that Mr. Gettys had put up before there was even any Gettysburg at all.

Part of the house was used for living quarters—the part nearest the square—but the far end on York Street contained Mr. Wills' law office. There was a small door up at that end so that the clients could enter right from the street without having to go through the house.

Captain Eckert stood for a moment on the brick sidewalk trying to make up his mind which door to knock on. He figured that at this hour Mr. Wills would be having his dinner in the living quarters. So John went up the three stone steps to the big family door, took hold of the iron knocker, and rapped twice.

Mr. and Mrs. Wills were alone in the dining room—a big room with high windows that looked out on the Diamond. The children had finished dinner, had folded their napkins neatly, put them in napkin rings, and had gone upstairs to get ready to go back to school for the afternoon session.

Mr. and Mrs. Wills were still sitting at the table, for Mr. Wills was having an extra

cup of coffee before going back to his office.

He was a short good-looking man in his early thirties, with a bushy black beard which made him look much older.

Though Mrs. Wills was younger than her husband, she had quite a matronly look, for her smooth brown hair was covered by a frilled dimity cap, and over her plum colored cashmere dress, she wore a black bombazine apron.

Mr. Wills had been pleased at first when Governor Curtin had appointed him Chairman of the Dedication Committee, but he found that it was proving to be quite a job.

"I really laid down the law to Martin," Mr. Wills said, as he stirred his coffee. "I told him that it's absolutely necessary to get this place cleaned up before the dedication. Why, it's only a few weeks off now. We can't have a parade going up Baltimore Street with all those pieces of cannon and broken-down carts and dead animals lying around."

"You're absolutely right, Mr. Wills," said

his wife. "I drove out to Shetter's farm only yesterday to get some eggs, and when I went by the Wade house, I was absolutely horrified by the condition of their front yard."

"Well, of course, a lot of fighting went on right around there," said Mr. Wills. "We can't expect to get the bullet holes plugged up, and the houses back into shape, but at least we can get the rubble cleaned up. The Burgess says he's doing his best, and I really believe he is. But he has to contend with all that Army red tape. The Federal Sanitary Commission is supposed to be in charge, but now they've sent away all the wounded who were able to get about and were helping, and have shipped them out. They don't want them here at the time of the dedication. They're afraid they might make some trouble because nobody really knows which are Confederates and which are Federals.

"Burgess Martin tells me that the Army's bringing in a bunch of Irish to help Colonel McDowell on the cemetery site. They were supposed to come on the Up train this morn-

ing. I'll tell you, Millie, it's a real problem—getting this town ready."

The people of Gettysburg had been coping with this problem for quite a while now. Until just a few days before the battle in July the Pennsylvania German farmers of that section had hardly known that there was a war going on. Their fields were flourishing, their orchards in bloom, their truck gardens producing. Because of the war, prices had boomed and the whole district was prospering.

And then, suddenly, Lee's army had appeared from almost nowhere, threatening the State Capitol, plundering the fields, driving off the cattle. The Confederates had penetrated to Carlisle, 40 miles north of Gettysburg. It looked for a bit as if they might even take Harrisburg. Then, on the third of July, a company of Rebel cavalry had ridden into Gettysburg. They were a raiding party. They had come to commandeer boots and saddles from the leather works for which the town was famous.

But it so happened that a company of Yankee cavalry, with the same purpose in mind, had ridden in from another direction.

Unexpectedly, the two found themselves facing each other. There was a skirmish.

The main forces of each side, hearing the shooting, moved in to investigate—and the battle was on.

For three days and nights, the sound of gunshot and cannon fire had rolled over the town. Men had fallen on Seminary Ridge up by the college to the north; at Cemetery Ridge—even in the burying ground—at the southern end of the town. There had been fighting on Baltimore Avenue, within a few blocks of the Diamond, and on York Street, and over to the west a short distance beyond the railroad tracks. All Gettysburg had been ringed by the opposing armies. Suddenly the town was in the middle of the war that had seemed so far away.

After three bloody days the fighting stopped. The Army of Virginia was gone, as swiftly and as mysteriously as it had come.

The Union troops, always slow, waited a few days and then followed in pursuit of the Rebels.

The people around Gettysburg were happy that the Southerners had been chased across the Potomac into Virginia again and that the war had been carried once more into the enemy's territory, away from their beloved Pennsylvania.

Although the battle had been fierce, the fighting dreadful, and the numbers of men slaughtered, the largest ever to have been killed in a single battle, the land quickly recovered. Only to the south, between the Ridges and on Little Round Top—where the gray troops under Pickett had made their last desperate charge—were the cornfields trampled beyond repair, the trees ruined by smoke and grapeshot, and an occasional farmhouse riddled by shells or gutted by fire.

As soon as trenches were dug for mass burials the farmers went back to work. The crops were good and the orchards flourished.

But the battle had left its mark. Every now and then a farmer driving a plow would turn up a rotting uniform, a broken gun, or a handful of buttons.

Then, too, horses and mules had been left lying in the fields, and broken wagons and guns littered the city's streets. And in every church and public building—even in private houses—the wounded, the sick and the dying, were being cared for.

The wounded who could walk streamed through the town. They stole rides on the railroad, or bribed farmers to carry them to Carlisle or Harrisburg or to any junction on the way to Baltimore or Washington where they could seek out their homes and families.

Less than a month after the battle, the Town Fathers had applied to the government for a grant to enlarge the town burying ground. This was to be used for a central cemetery for the men who had fallen at Gettysburg.

The idea had snowballed. From being a local project, it had become a national one.

The eighteen Northern states whose sons had fought and struggled there, subscribed a large fund, to which the Federal Government had added its quota. The plan was to make this burial ground into the first National Cemetery.

A commission of Gettysburg citizens had been appointed by Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania to plan the dedication and no one was surprised when Mr. Wills was selected as chairman. For Mr. Wills, in addition to being a lawyer, was "in politics."

Politics in Pennsylvania were seething. There was a strong anti-Lincoln faction. Some members of this clique were against the President because they wanted the war to end. They demanded a "negotiated peace." They said that Lincoln was "prolonging the war." He was too stubborn, they thought, and shouldn't insist on "unconditional surrender." "Let the Southern states go," they said. "We can get along without them. We just want our boys to come home."

These people called it "Mr. Lincoln's war."

Others, of the anti-Lincoln men, thought that Mr. Lincoln had stirred up the South by issuing his Emancipation Proclamation.

"Let the planters keep their slaves. They'll get rid of them eventually."

It wasn't only Northern Democrats who said these things—there were plenty of Republicans to back them up. They were rallying behind the former Chief of the Army, General McClellan. The President had relieved him of his command of the Army because, Lincoln said, the General "had the slows,"—he took too long to make up his mind before going into action. But the opposition looked on McClellan as presidential timber. They said he had more dignity than Lincoln. They called the war President a "clumsy ape, a big baboon," and branded his behavior vulgar, and his humor, coarse.

But Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania didn't join the critics. He was all for Lincoln. And Mr. Wills was a Curtin man.

Under Mr. Wills, preparations for the

dedication went ahead at a great rate. First the date had been set for early October. Dr. Edward Everett, a leading abolitionist and a distinguished and popular orator from Boston, was invited to deliver the principal oration. Dr. Everett accepted, but asked that the dedication be delayed. He needed more time, he said, to prepare a suitable address.

So now the date was set—November 19th—less than three weeks off.

As the time grew short, Mr. Wills' troubles multiplied. Getting the town cleaned up was his biggest headache, though he had other headaches, too.

"The town's going to be full of people," he said to Mrs. Wills. "The Knights Templars are coming here for a conclave. They plan to march in the procession to the cemetery. And all sorts of Congressmen and the Governors of twelve states have accepted invitations. The farmers will come in from all around, too. And then, too, there'll be pickpockets and all kinds of riffraff."

"Have you heard from any Cabinet Ministers or Senators yet?" asked Mrs. Wills.

"Oh, I don't think we'll get any of them," said Mr. Wills. "We sent invitations to them just as a matter of course. And to the President, too. But of course, they're all pretty busy. We can hardly expect to get them to this little one-horse town."

Just then there came a double knock at the door.

"I don't get a moment's peace," said Mr. Wills. "Who can that be?"

Mrs. Wills made a little sympathetic clucking sound.

The maid came in from the kitchen on her way to the door.

"I'll answer it myself," said Mr. Wills. "I might just as well." And he strode out to the hallway and threw open the door.

On the stoop stood a tall man in a Prince Albert coat and a plug hat. Mr. Wills recognized him instantly as the captain of the morning train.

"Good afternoon," he said, as politely as though he'd been expecting company.

"Mr. David Wills?" asked Captain Eckert.

This mystified Mr. Wills still further. He was sure Captain Eckert recognized him, too. They had often spoken together down at the station.

"At your service," said Mr. Wills.

"Mr. Wills," said Captain Eckert, "I have just come from the depot. While I was there a message came for you over the wires. The Morse man could not get away and the boy had departed for his midday meal, so because of its import," and he coughed slightly, "I felt it my duty to bring it to you."

Mr. Wills had a little difficulty in restraining a smile. By now he was so used to telegrams from governors and political personages that he treated them as a matter of course. But he understood that the other people in Gettysburg might not feel the same way.

"That's most kind of you, Captain," he

said. "Won't you come in? My wife and I are just having a cup of coffee. Perhaps you might like to join us."

Captain Eckert came inside at once. He took off his hat and followed Mr. Wills down the short entry into the dining room.

"Won't you rest your hat?" said Mr. Wills.

Captain Eckert removed the telegram from the inside band of his topper and hung the hat up on the rack.

"Mrs. Wills," said Mr. Wills opening the door to the dining room, "here is Captain Eckert who has been kind enough to bring me a telegram from the station. I've asked him to take some coffee with us."

Mrs. Wills was still sitting behind the big plated silver urn at the head of the table. She greeted the captain and at the same time motioned to him to sit in the chair beside her. As he sat down she tapped smartly on the bell in front of her.

"Bring a clean cup and saucer, will you, please, Tina," she said to the rosy, German-

looking girl who stuck her head in the kitchen door.

All this time Captain Eckert was holding the telegram in his hand waiting for an opportunity to give it to Mr. Wills. The girl brought a big over-sized cup, and Mrs. Wills filled it. The maid set it before him. Mr. Wills passed a big pitcher of hot milk and the fat sugar bowl. Before Captain Eckert helped himself, he laid the telegram on the table.

"If you'll excuse me, Ma'am, before I indulge, I would like to execute my errand."

Mr. Wills pulled a chair up next to him and sat down.

"That's right, Captain," he said. "That's right. Business before pleasure. And while I'm reading the telegram, Mother," he said to Mrs. Wills, "will you let me have a fresh cup?"

Then he picked up the telegram, and tore it open.

"Eh!" he said. "Well, well! What's this!"

His expression of surprise was so violent that Captain Eckert set down his cup, and Mrs. Wills almost spilled the coffee she was pouring.

"Is it something bad, Mr. Wills?" she asked.

"Bad?" said Mr. Wills. "I don't know, I don't know. But certainly astounding. Mrs. Wills, my dear—Mrs. Wills—the President of the United States has accepted the invitation to be present at the dedication. What's more, he has indicated that he would like to make a few appropriate remarks."

Mrs. Wills sat back dumbfounded. And Captain Eckert sipped his coffee, satisfied with the impression that his news had made.

"This complicates everything," said Mr. Wills. "This means that we must have more guards, more soldiers, and a complete revision of the program."

"But it will make the occasion more impressive," said Mrs. Wills.

"To some people, yes. To some people, no," said Mr. Wills. "For me it will double

the responsibility. We must see that he is properly received. Of course, he will probably just come up that morning, attend the ceremonies, and leave. But my dear, if he should come up on Saturday, what will we do with him? The homes of the most prominent men are already full up with guests! And the hotel would never do! What kind of accommodation is there in a town like this for such an important guest?"

Mrs. Wills, unruffled, finished filling the cup she was holding. Calmly she handed it to her husband. Then she sat back in her chair and folded her hands.

"Where will he stay?" she said. "You, Mr. Wills, are Chairman of the Commission. It is only fitting that our residence should be put at his disposal. I trust that I can make him comfortable. It will be an honor to entertain the President of the United States, in our home."

The Captain Takes Command

When Captain Eckert left the Wills house, he carried inside of his stovepipe hat a message from Mr. Wills to the President of the United States. Mr. Wills had requested him to dictate it personally to the telegraph operator. Halfway across the Diamond, he saw a boy come running out of the hotel.

It was Billy Kleinfelder, the little boy who generally carried the messages and whom he'd sent up to Mrs. Strickhauser's himself, that very day. How long ago it seemed! He could hardly believe that only a short while ago he'd come in with the train.

The captain looked at his watch. Two-

twenty! It was almost time to get back to the Wye, if he were going to keep his on-time record.

He started across the Diamond at a good clip, dodging in and out among the farm wagons and carriages, and people on horse and mule back, that were constantly going around the Diamond.

He was halfway over to Carlisle Street when he heard his name being called. He stopped and looked around. It was Billy, running toward him.

"What now?" But he waited just the same till the boy caught up with him.

"What's up, Billy?" he said, kindly. "Did you want me?"

Billy breathed hard for a minute. "Mr. Kneckel told me there was a telegram to be delivered," he said. "He thought you'd gone to the hotel first maybe, and that I could catch up with you. That's my job, you know, Captain Eckert, delivering the telegrams, and I wouldn't want you to have to do my job."

"That's all right, Billy," said the captain. "I delivered the telegram. I didn't stop at the hotel."

"Oh!" Billy looked glum. "Then there's nothing for me to do. I might just as well go back to school."

"I'll tell you what, Billy," said Mr. Eckert. "I know you ought to be in school, but since you're late anyway, I'm going to let you do something."

He took off his hat and took Mr. Wills' message out of the inside band. "You go along with me and you carry the paper. Put it in the pocket of your jacket because it's pretty private. It has to go straight to the telegraph operator. It's nothing for the hangers-around to see."

He held it in his hand for a moment, weighing it. Then he handed it to Billy. "You see, Billy," he said, "now you're carrying a dispatch for the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln."

Billy took the paper in his not-too-clean fist and placed it reverently in his pocket.

"A dispatch for the President," he said in a subdued voice. He felt almost like a soldier as he walked along beside Mr. Eckert to the station. He kept touching his pocket with his hand to make sure the precious paper was still there.

When they got to the station they found that quite a crowd had gathered. Evidently the news had spread by the grapevine that a telegram had been received from the President. Mr. Swisher had returned and was busy telling all about what had happened.

"I wasn't out of the depot for three quarters of an hour," he was saying. "This here message came and there wasn't anybody in the station at all but Kneckel. Nobody could have expected anything to happen even with all that's going on, at that time of day. And there was Kneckel alone."

"I wasn't, to say, altogether alone," said Kneckel. He'd come out of the telegraph office and he was sharing the limelight with Swisher for once in his life. "Captain Eckert was here too, you know."

"Yes, yes," said Swisher. "I know that. But the captain doesn't know Morse—not like you and me. And here was this important thing coming in and you had to take it all by yourself. It was a great responsibility."

"Look, Mr. Swisher," said Kneckel, "when I was in the Army, we used to get plenty of important messages and nobody had to hang over my shoulder to see that I got it down right. As soon as this message began coming in, I knew it was something special, and I gave them the GA and I took it down just the way it came over the wire. And I verified it and there wasn't a word lost. And if it hadn't been for Captain Eckert being here and willing to give up his dinnertime, it wouldn't have got up to Mr. Wills."

"It coulda' waited," said Mr. Swisher. "I came along just a couple of minutes after, and then Billy turned up. You know, I do manage to run this here depot even when there ain't no trains coming in."

While all this argument was going on, Captain Eckert and Billy slipped into the

station unnoticed. They went straight into the inner office, deserted now even by Kneckel. The talk had switched to the contents of the telegram. Kneckel seemed to have lost all of his sleepiness and was giving the details of the great event, while Swisher needled him.

Captain Eckert waited a few minutes while the excitement mounted. Suddenly he went over to the ticket window, threw up the sash and boomed forth in his best station-calling manner:

"Mr. Kneckel, may I have your attention?"

Kneckel broke off in the middle of a sentence and everybody whirled around and looked at Captain Eckert, framed in the window.

You could have heard a pin drop!

"If you can spare me a moment," he said, changing to his usual quiet voice, "Billy has here, for you, the reply which Mr. David Wills wishes to have transmitted to Washington, to the President of the United States."

Kneckel made a rush for the office, with

Swisher at his heels. The crowd surged toward the open ticket window, trying to hear what would happen next.

"You got the message?" said Kneckel, closing the door behind him.

Swisher hadn't been quick enough. He was caught on the outside! And it was his own office, too! He started fumbling in his pocket for his key.

"All right," said Kneckel, sitting down at the instrument and holding out his hand to Billy. "Give me the message and I'll send it."

Billy looked at the captain for permission, undecided what to do.

"If you will get ready to make the call, Mr. Kneckel," said the captain, "I will read you the message as Mr. Wills requested me to do."

Billy, without hesitation, took the paper out of his pocket and handed it to Mr. Eckert.

Kneckel looked around over his shoulder and took in the situation. He grinned.

"All right, Captain," he said. "You're the boss. O.K., I'm waiting."

Mr. Swisher by this time had come into the office and was dancing around with impatience. The crowd in the waiting room craned their necks and strained their ears.

Captain Eckert deliberately took off his hat and set it on the desk beside Kneckel, pulled up a chair, and sat down.

"Call the War Department in Washington."

Kneckel obediently tapped out the call. He made it three times, before he received an acknowledgment.

"O.K., boss," he said again.

Captain Eckert began reading.

"To the Chief of the Army of the United States, War Department, Washington, D.C. . . ."

The Kitchen

Mrs. Eckert looked at the banjo clock hanging on the kitchen wall. The hands pointed to 5:27.

The captain was eleven minutes late. She shook her head. Usually he came in punctually at 5:16. This gave him time to wash up, get on his house slippers, and sit down to his supper on the dot of 6:20.

Something must be wrong.

The last time the captain had been late was four months back. It was while he was still working over on the Union Mills Branch. He had had a good reason that time. The main column of the United States Army

under General Meade was marching towards Gettysburg, and everybody that worked on the railroad was busy bringing up supplies. John had only been a brakeman then—the "swing man" in a crew of three. He'd had to stay on with all the rest. He hadn't been able to come home for three days, not till the night of July 4th when the battle was over. A farmer in a wagon had stopped by to tell Mrs. Eckert not to wait supper for him, but she'd managed somehow to have something nice and hot for him when he did finally get home.

Mrs. Eckert was like that. She figured it was more important for her to keep her man well fed than to run around like some other women did, trying to find out what was happening with battles.

She made up her mind now that she'd find out soon enough if there was something wrong. She went back to tending to a mess of stew that stood on top of the stove, stirring it with a long-handled spoon. In between times she'd ladle out a bit, blow on it until

it was cool and give it to three-year-old Johnny who was sitting in his high chair at her elbow.

Every time she did this, Johnny banged on his tray with his pewter spoon and kicked up his heels. He had his own bowl of stew in front of him but he liked the extra feeding better.

Just as the clock struck 5:30 the kitchen door opened and Captain Eckert came in.

Generally, when Mr. Eckert came home, he walked right over to the stove and kissed his wife and his son before he started taking off his coat and getting ready for supper. But tonight he just kept standing by the door.

Mrs. Eckert was surer than ever that something was wrong.

Like a good wife she stopped what she was doing and turned around to face her husband. John didn't say a word. He just stood there by the door.

"Well, everything in good time," thought Mrs. Eckert. "Good evening, Father," she

said aloud. "Wash up as quick as you can. I've got scrapple for supper."

A lot of things had happened since the cold weather—the end of the last scrapple season. There'd been that battle, and not so long after, Mr. Eckert had got his promotion to captain. Now it was fall again and the farmers were making scrapple once more. The first scrapple of the year was always a big event in a Pennsylvania kitchen, and John Eckert knew as well as the next man that scrapple once browned and ready was not to be kept waiting.

Just the same, he continued to stand in front of the door.

Mrs. Eckert lost her patience a little.

"Captain Eckert," she said severely, "scrapple's already on the stove, and Johnny's half et."

The Captain still didn't move.

"You been down to Shetter's today?" he asked.

"Sure I been," said Mrs. Eckert, somewhat tartly. "What's so special about that? I went

down early this morning to lay in provisions. That's how I found scrapple was in. I got what I needed and come right back. If you mean, have I been gaddin' this evening—the answer is, I got other things to do. I leave the gossip to you men."

Mr. Eckert knew she hadn't heard the news, and was in no mood to be told it now. She had her mind on one thing, supper, and he realized from experience there wasn't room for anything else until that was over.

So he took the hint.

He hung up his Prince Albert, put his top hat on the shelf, and sat down in the rocker and changed his shoes. Then he went over to the tap, took off his high stiff collar, rolled up his sleeves carefully, so as not to crease his starched cuffs, and began washing in the basin.

Mrs. Eckert served up a couple of steaming plates of stew and potatoes and green beans, and the scrapple. She pulled up Johnny's high chair next to the table and sat down at one end.

Mr. Eckert dried his hands on the roller towel hanging on the wall and took his place in the armchair opposite her.

Not another word was spoken until supper was finished. But even after supper, the captain had to bide his time. He helped his wife stack the dishes. Then he sat down in the rocker and smoked a cigar while she washed up.

Captain Eckert began to get fidgety. He kept looking at the door. He was afraid that maybe some neighbor would drop in and spill the beans before he got his chance. Just the same, he knew he had to wait until his wife finished her household chores before she'd be any good as an audience.

So he just sat there rocking and smoking and hoping his luck'd hold.

Mrs. Eckert finished washing the dishes and put them away in the big wooden dresser. It was almost dark so she lighted the lamps and closed the blinds, and swept up in front of the stove.

She took Johnny out of his chair, wiped

his face with her apron, and sat down in the big armchair with him on her lap.

Now she was ready to be an audience.

The captain took his cue. He began at the very beginning—how he had left the house in the morning, gone down to the station at Hanover, and had made the little run east to Hanover Junction to meet the Northern Central Express. There, he had taken on his passengers and freight, and started out to Gettysburg with the Up train.

This was all routine stuff for Mrs. Eckert. She'd listened to it over and over again. But she loved hearing all the details, especially what happened on the regular run from Hanover Junction to Gettysburg. She liked to know who had flagged down the train, who had sent eggs, what children had been put on the train. She wanted to be told all the other little incidents that made up the captain's daily life while he was away from her. She only interrupted once.

"Did the new baby come all right? Boy or girl?"

The captain cleared up that point and then went on with his story. He passed quickly over the Irish crew that he had carried to Gettysburg and though Mrs. Eckert was dying to know more about these strange creatures she thought it better not to stop him a second time. She got the feeling that he was working up to something big.

So the captain went on talking, describing the arrival at Gettysburg and how they had taken the train up to the Wye and cleaned it up for the return trip. "Then," he said, "I went on back to the station to get my dinner. By that time there wasn't anybody in the station but Kneckel." He paused.

"That's the new Morse man, nei?" asked Mrs. Eckert. "The one you don't like so good?"

"That's him," said the captain, "but you know he ain't such a bad feller. . . . Well, anyhow, I sat down in the office and started eating. And then this thing happened."

He waited. He waited so long that Mrs. Eckert was worried. "You didn't find nothin'

the matter with your dinner?" she asked. "I made the sandwiches out of that sausage you said you liked. I know it's kind of early for pork, but . . ."

"The dinner was fine," said Mr. Eckert. "What happened didn't have nothin' to do with the dinner. What happened was—there was a telegram, and that telegram—who do you think that telegram was from?"

"From the Master of Transportation?" said Mrs. Eckert. She knew it must be from somebody big, for the captain to make such a fuss.

"That telegram was from somebody much bigger than the Master of Transportation. Guess again."

"From Mr. Eichelberger?" said Mrs. Eckert, beginning to enjoy the game.

"Not him neither," said Mr. Eckert. "Somebody bigger even than the President of the railroad. It was a telegram from the President of the United States."

Mrs. Eckert almost let Johnny drop, she was so astonished. She shifted him to a safer position on her lap and made clucking noises

with her tongue. "Tsk, tsk, tsk—just think, from the President of the United States! And was the telegram for you, John?"

Well, no, Mr. Eckert had to admit, it wasn't for him. It was for Mr. David Wills, the rich lawyer who lived in the biggest house in town, the man who was the Chairman of the Dedication Committee. But Mr. Eckert had personally, and with his own hands, delivered that telegram.

"Mr. Wills is a fine man, Mother," he said. "He invited me to come in and sit down and have coffee, before he even as much as looked at the telegram. And Mrs. Wills—she's a fine woman, too," he said.

He went on to tell his wife all about the inside of the house on the square, about the damask cover on the dining room table, about the fine silver coffee set, and the Dresden coffee cups. He told how Mrs. Wills sat at the table and never went into the kitchen, but had the hired girl going out for things. He even told about the silver teaspoons and the fine steel knife with which

Mrs. Wills cut the *Bundkuchen*. "That knife must have been in her family for years," he said. "Her grandmother, maybe, brought it from the Old Country."

Then he told how Mr. Wills had read the message from the President, how Mr. and Mrs. Wills had discussed where he was going to stay and had decided to invite him to their own house. How he had followed Mr. Wills into his office while he wrote out the invitation to be sent.

"I went to go back to the station," he said, "it was time for me to get up to the Wye to get my Down train started, and outside there in the square there was Billy Kleinfelder. Billy, you know, is the boy that runs the errands. He makes a little money doing that in between times when he isn't in school. His mother ain't so healthy and he needs the money.

"Well, of course, I could have taken that message back myself, but you know what I did? I took that message and handed it to Billy, and I let him carry it down to the

station for me. Of course, I went with him, but I thought to myself that this was something that a little boy like that could do that he'd remember all his life—carrying a message for President Lincoln. I kept thinking how I wished our own Johnny was there so he could have done it."

Mrs. Eckert gave Johnny a hug. "Johnny ain't old enough yet to do those things," said Mrs. Eckert. "It'll be a good many years before I'll want him running around under all them wagons and things that are out in the roads these days."

"Well, anyway," the captain went on, "we went back to the depot—Billy and me. There was a big crowd there—and I went inside and took the message from Billy and in front of all those people—just like Mr. Wills told me to do, I dictated those words that Mr. Wills had written. I made Kneckel sit down at the telegraph instrument and send them just like I said them, that telegram to the President of the United States."

Mr. Eckert sat back, folded his hands, and

began to rock contentedly. Mrs. Eckert didn't say anything right away.

"Well, Mother," said Mr. Eckert after a moment, "what do you think of that for a day's work?"

"Do you think that was a real silver coffeepot?" she said at last. "Or do you think it was just plated?"

Captain Eckert stopped rocking. Wasn't that just like women? Couldn't they see anything except housekeeping?

"That ain't the point, Mother," he said. "The point is that the President of the United States—Abe Lincoln himself—is going to be right here."

He took hold of the arms of the chair and leaned forward.

"They say he's comin' up by rail. And, who knows—maybe he'll be riding on my very own train."

Orders

The plans for the dedication were made public. The ceremonies would begin with a great parade reviewed by the President, from a spot in the Diamond. Among the marchers would be contingents from each branch of the military—soldiers of the Army of the Potomac—infantry, cavalry and artillery. The Knights Templars would walk in full regalia, leading a whole procession of other fraternal orders. And there would be carriages filled with celebrities, and, of course, several bands.

The line of march was from the Diamond out Baltimore Avenue, to the cemetery site.

Here an elaborate program would be presented. The crowning glory would be an oration by the Honorable Edward Everett of Boston, whose reputation as a speaker was widely known. Masons would break the ground; there would be music. And the President would make a few appropriate remarks.

After the ceremony a reception would be held at the home of Mrs. David Wills. And after that, a religious service and a preaching at the First Lutheran Church.

The authorities expected the town to be jammed with visitors. The Army of the Potomac would bivouac out on Seminary Ridge, so that problem was settled. And every house in town would be filled to the brim.

Eleven governors were expected, a big contingent of distinguished generals, and a smaller number of senators and congressmen. Three Cabinet members had accepted—William Seward, Secretary of State; J. P. Usher, Secretary of the Interior; and Montgomery Blair, the new Postmaster General. And to

add an international flavor, there would be representatives from several foreign governments.

There had been one or two notable refusals. Chief among these was Pennsylvania Congressman Thaddeus Stevens, boss of the Republican House of Representatives. Another was his friend, Secretary of War Stanton. These two men were known to be violently opposed to the President's policies. They were determined to see that he was not sent back to the White House when the Presidential elections came along the following November.

They were already putting forth their own candidate—the handsome general, George B. McClellan. Lincoln had removed him as Commanding General of the Army just shortly before the Battle of Gettysburg. The fight over his dismissal had been bitter and political, but Lincoln had had his way. McClellan wasn't quick enough to act—he had, as Lincoln put it, "the slows."

The anti-Lincoln politicians had called the

President's action unjust and uncalled-for. McClellan's popularity with the rank and file of the Army, his good looks and attractive personality, made him a good candidate.

Representative Stevens and Secretary Stanton were publicly declaring war on Lincoln by not coming to Gettysburg.

Indeed, there were only a few office holders who dared to risk their political popularity by coming out openly for Lincoln. Never in all his Presidential term had Lincoln's future seemed so shaky. The victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, on the Fourth of July, had not bolstered his position with the bigwigs and the men in power.

"Nobody likes Lincoln but the people," said a pro-Lincoln paper, and this statement was going to be put to a test in the Presidential elections. Next year would show who was right.

Like all the other locals, the men concerned with the Hanover Branch Railroad expected to have a couple of busy days. Mr. Swisher was almost beside himself with his

preparations. He even went so far as to have the depot slicked up, and he was loud in his complaints and boastings of what his responsibilities would be.

The Morse men had been instructed to be on duty for twenty-four hours around the clock, to accept and receive important messages. And Captain Eckert had a pretty good idea of what it would be like running his trains in and out, full of tourists and sightseers.

The President was coming by rail. His schedule was planned so that his car would leave Washington early Sunday morning. At Baltimore it would be taken across the city by horse power and coupled on to the Northern Central train. At Hanover Junction there would be another interchange. The President would be switched from the main tracks over to the Hanover Branch.

With such a timetable, Captain Eckert didn't expect to do more than catch a glimpse of the President. His Up train would arrive at Gettysburg at 12:15—long

after the Special. The parade would be practically over by that time. As for going to the cemetery, he certainly couldn't take a chance with all the crowds, of getting out there and back between trips. He felt sort of left out. Mrs. Eckert was probably right—the dedication would only mean more work and a big headache as far as he was concerned.

Early on the Thursday morning before the Dedication, Mr. Eckert took his place as usual beside the Northern Central tracks at Hanover Junction with his big watch in his hand. He was waiting for the Baltimore Express to pull in with his regular quota of baggage and passengers. Nearby, on the tracks of the Hanover Branch and Gettysburg Railroad his own Up train was standing. Steam was up, and the engineer at the throttle was ready to go just as soon as Mr. Eckert gave him the high ball.

The Northern Central was four minutes late already. Mr. Eckert kept looking at his watch. He certainly hated to have anything like this happen to his schedule after he'd

made such a good on-time record. A man's promotion depended a good deal on his on-time record.

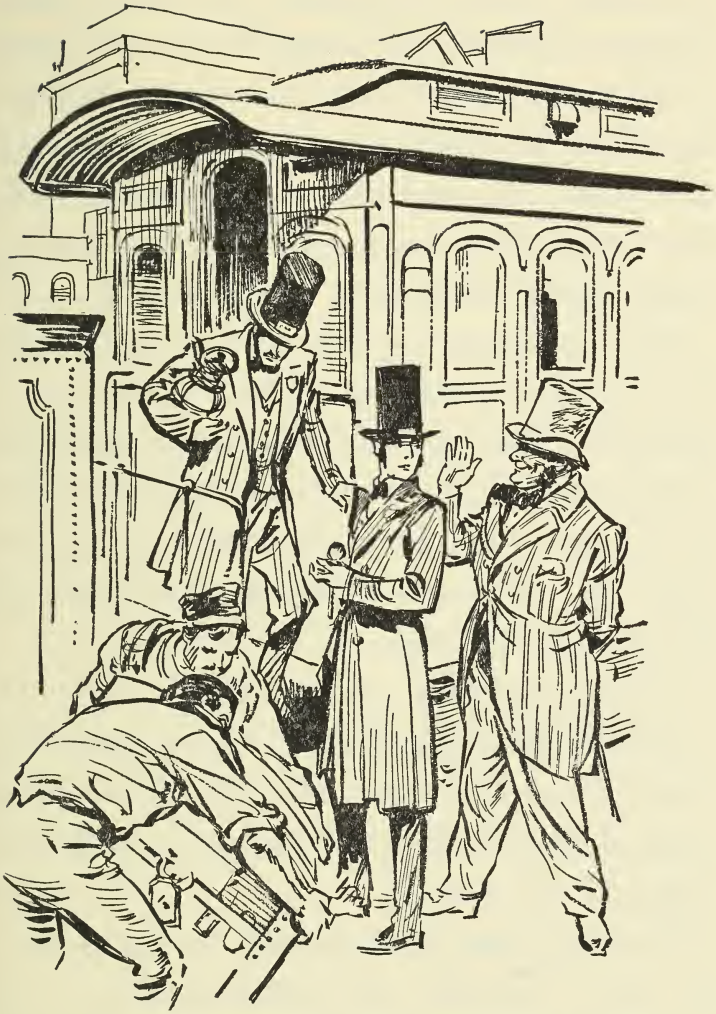
Four minutes—four minutes and thirty seconds—five minutes—five minutes and twenty seconds—and the Express hove in sight around the bend.

Captain Eckert snapped his watch shut and put it away in his vest pocket.

He looked around to see what had become of his train crew. Good men!—the brakemen were standing next to the Northern Central tracks with the station agent all ready to help transfer the freight from one train to the other. They'd have to hustle, though.

When Captain Eckert had first become conductor they used to loll around on the baggage trucks until the train pulled in. But he had put a stop to that. Now, all of them were on their toes. That's the way it ought to be, he thought. Only takes a little organization to get things going.

Almost before the Express had pulled up,



the door of the baggage car rolled open. Captain Eckert only waited to see the crew inside getting ready to hand out the baggage. Then he hurried toward the head end of the train. His watch was out again. He'd have something to say besides exchanging orders with the captain of the Express.

The conductor swung off the steps onto the platform beside Mr. Eckert. At the same moment, John Eckert felt someone grab his arm from behind. He wheeled around, mad as a hornet, and found himself face to face with Mr. Horvath, Chief of Operations of the Branch Railroad.

"Morning, John," said the Chief.

Still holding Mr. Eckert by the arm, the Chief drew him away from the side of the train, down the platform, and into a secluded angle of the station.

"I've got something to talk to you about," he said. "Private. *And* extra special."

What had happened, thought John. Could he have made any mistake in operations that was so serious that the Master of Transpor-

tation had come all the way up from Baltimore to speak to him about it? Well, maybe so, but he wasn't going to let himself be thrown off schedule any worse than he was already—not if he could help it.

"I hope it won't take too long, sir," he said. "The Express was five minutes and twenty seconds late in pulling in, and I want to make it up on my schedule if I can. My engineer's waiting for the high ball."

The Big Boss laughed. "That's just what I wanted to talk to you about," he said. "It's your on-time record."

John knew he didn't have to worry about *that*. He'd only been late twice since he took over his train, and that took some doing on a little side pike like this one.

"I'll let you in on a secret," said the Superintendent.

The captain snapped his watch shut and put it in his pocket.

"Here's how it is. You know it was all fixed, that the President was coming up Sunday morning for the Dedication."

"Why, isn't he coming?" asked the captain.

"He's coming, all right," Mr. Horvath went on. "But he ain't comin' Sunday morning."

"How's that?" asked John.

"Well, the plans have been changed. When they told Old Abe about the schedule he wasn't satisfied. Says he in his blunt way, 'What time is the dedication?' Well, they told him about the parade and so forth and so on, and what do you think that old timer said—that that was cutting it too fine. So what do you think?" And he paused.

"What?" said Mr. Eckert.

"He's comin' up the evenin' before. They'll put him on the Saturday evening Express—B. & O. They'll get to Baltimore about 3:00 o'clock. They'll take the train across the city to the Northern Central tracks as usual, and go out on that regular Philadelphia Express that pulls in here at the junction at 5:02. Then we'll put on a special train. We'll have it waiting here and the President and his party will come over and get on and we'll carry them the rest of the way."

"Does Mr. Wills know about the change?" asked John.

"Nobody up here knows," said the Chief.

"You want me to take him the message?" asked John.

"How Mr. Wills and his committee hears about this," Mr. Horvath went on, "that ain't our affair. That's up to the politicians. We're railroading."

He took off his hat and removed a paper from the inside.

"Now on Saturday, Captain, you're to let one of your regular men take up the morning train for you. This here Presidential Special's your baby. The Presidential party is going to be small. You can get 'em all into a couple of cars—a coach and one combination'll do it. There'll be soldiers and photographers and newsmen and you can put them into the baggage section. Now you look sharp and get the two best-looking cars you can find around Hanover. We've got one of those new mountain type 2—4—0s down the line. It's a good looking engine with brand new brass and

painted up real gay. We'll run that up here for you. You pick the best driver you've got, and the neatest hoghead to fire the boiler, and three good trainmen . . ."

Captain Eckert listened in a sort of daze. With one part of his mind he was reviewing the orders. With the other part, he was having a little private jubilation. His train was sure gonna be late *this* morning—but for once he didn't care.

"Here's your orders, Captain Eckert. Up Saturday and back on Sunday."

John put out his hand and took the papers.

"Don't talk about this any more than you have to. It'll get around anyway. And Captain," the Superintendent was smiling, "on the way up you'll probably have to take it easy, what with the crowds and all. That'll be all right. But on the Down Run you will have to make the connection with the Northern Central train so the President can get back to Washington, D.C. That there's one run that the Railroad Company looks to you to make *on time.*"

Hanover Junction

Two fifty-six P.M. railroad time, November 18th, 1863.

In three minutes the Northern Central Express was due to come whistling in with President Lincoln's special car coupled to its tail end.

Over on the Hanover Branch tracks was Captain Eckert's train, spitting steam and ready to go. The brass on the fine red and green engine was as bright as elbow grease could make it, and the pumpkin yellow cars and red-rimmed glass windows were spotless. Captain Eckert had just made a last-minute inspection trip through the cars to

see that no single speck marred the red plush seats.

Captain Eckert was as spruced up as the train. His stovepipe hat and conductor's badge fairly glittered, their shine reflected in his sparkling footgear. He had spent a good part of the last evening polishing his square-toed high shoes with lampblack, while Mrs. Eckert brushed and pressed his Prince Albert coat and his tight black pants. He looked mighty impressive as he stood there waiting next to the Northern Central tracks —at the exact spot on the platform where he knew the Express conductor would land when he swung off the steps of the incoming train, as it slowed to a stop.

Thus the two men could check their watches and exchange orders without wasting a single moment.

A more than fair-sized crowd had gathered to see the train come in.

The men and boys were lined up on the platform, and down both sides of the track almost as far as the bend. The women with

the smaller children, what there was of them, were somewhat in the background, standing together over on the Hanover Branch side.

Captain Eckert didn't have to look. He was well aware that Mrs. Eckert was in that little knot on the other side of the depot by his own train, and that Johnny was with her. This had all been discussed at home and the details arranged.

"Someday, Mother," Captain Eckert had said at the supper table, when he was telling Mrs. Eckert about his orders, "Johnny will want to tell his children, and maybe his grandchildren, that he saw his Poppa when he was conductor for President Lincoln. 'Old Abe,' as they call him, is a great man—our war President. That's a big thing, and they say he's mighty kind and doesn't put on any airs —that he's 'folks' just like us. It'd be nice for Johnny to see him."

"And for me, too," said Mrs. Eckert. "I'd like to see what happens. But can we fix it, Poppa?"

"The only question is," said Captain

Eckert, "how you could get from Hanover to the Junction so's you could be there when he comes in."

"Couldn't you take us down in one of your cars?" asked Mrs. Eckert. "After all, you're the captain of the train, and we'd be very careful and I wouldn't let Johnny even touch anything to smudge it up. I'd hold him in my lap just as quiet as anything."

"No," said the captain, "that wouldn't be right. If I took you, then the rest of the crew would want to take their families, and maybe they ain't so neat as you. Besides, that wouldn't be regulations on a train like that."

"It's a shame," said Mrs. Eckert. "I allow the President would like to have our Johnny there."

"Mebbe," said Mr. Eckert. "They say he likes children. He's got a little boy himself—might happen he'd understand."

Mrs. Eckert made a noise with her tongue. "Poor man," she said. "He ain't had much luck with his family."

"No," said Mr. Eckert. "The big boy Robert

—he's all right. He's grown-up and away at school. But I remember hearing about his losing a baby boy back at Springfield before he was elected."

"And then, just last year, with his Willie passing away like that!"

"That was awfully sad!"

"I'm sorry for Mrs. Lincoln, too," said Mrs. Eckert. "I understand she took it hard and now she's only got one boy left at home—that little one, Tad."

"They say that little Tad's a caution," said the captain, "breaking into the Cabinet meetings and playing tricks on the White House guards. And Willie, the one that died last winter—they say he was a lively boy, too."

"People are awfully hard on little boys," said Mrs. Eckert. "Seems like only their Mamas and Papas can understand them." Little Johnny was standing beside her. She lifted him into her lap and gave him a big hug.

"For sure, somebody's going to drive over," said Mrs. Eckert. "Maybe you could get us a lift."

"That's better," said Mr. Eckert. And after supper he had put on his coat and drifted down to Shetter's. Shetter was just closing up, but some of the neighbors were still there, gathered around the stove.

Sure enough, Mr. Gruber was going to drive over to the Junction in his spring wagon on Saturday. He was taking Mrs. Gruber and the five children. With Mrs. Eckert and Johnny that would be eight, and he could put some boards across the body of the wagon and there'd be plenty of room for everybody to sit. Mrs. Gruber'd be mighty glad to have another grown person to help with the little ones.

So everything was arranged, and train time found Mrs. Eckert waiting with the other women at Hanover Junction.

At 2:58 on the dot, an engine whistled just beyond the bend. The President was coming.

With one motion, as though by magic, every single person on the platform turned in the direction of the whistle.

The Express hove in sight. Smoke billowed

from the diamond stack of the locomotive and two white flags fluttered on her head end as she came whistling in.

Conductor McIntosh had barely hit the platform when the Presidential party came streaming out of the Express. The train crew had its hands full, and there was no time for formalities.

A man in a pork pie hat and a good-looking young fellow, more stylishly dressed, came down out of the last coach. The man in the flat hat was Captain Allen Pinkerton, the detective, and the dandy was John Nicolay, the President's secretary. They stood at the foot of the steps, waiting. Then the President himself appeared. He didn't stop a moment. He walked right up the platform to the head end of the train and reached up and shook hands with the engineer who was hanging out of the cab window. Next he shook hands with the fireman, and after this was finished he walked back down the platform, tipping his hat to the cheering crowd until he came to where Captain McIntosh was standing with

Mr. Eckert. The two men were comparing their watches and here was the President of the United States coming to speak with them!

The first look that John got at the President gave him a shock. He was taller than anybody around him, and his carelessly brushed stovepipe hat made him look even taller. His trousers were wrinkled, and his shoes looked as though they were even bigger than his big feet. He wore his full-skirted coat loosely, as though somebody had thrown it to him just as he was leaving the house and he had caught it on the fly, just before he'd closed the door.

When John looked at the President's face, he thought he was the ugliest man he had ever seen—until he looked at his eyes. And in his eyes there was an expression at once so kindly and sad, and at the same time keen and merry, that John forgot all about his ugliness. It was easy to understand why no two people had the same opinion of the President.

Mr. Lincoln took the Express conductor's hand and shook it warmly.

"Thank you, Captain McIntosh," he said. "Thank you for an excellent run."

The President's voice was a big surprise, too. It was not at all the kind that John had expected to come out of so big a man. It wasn't deep and booming. It was high and thin and it twanged out through his big nose.

But there was no time for John to stop and think. He was being introduced to the President, and he was receiving a handshake.

The handshake, unlike the voice, was strong and warm.

Next, the President took out his watch and flipped it open. "On time," he said.

Mechanically, the two conductors took their watches out and checked their watches with Mr. Lincoln's.

"On time," said McIntosh.

John came back to his senses. He remembered the last words of the Master of Transport the day he got his orders.

"I reckon you have a schedule to make, too, Captain Eckert," said the President, as though he could read John's mind. He put his watch back in his pocket. "Don't let me keep you gentlemen from your duties." And he started striding across the platform toward the Gettysburg train.

The crowd surged in. The dapper young man—Mr. Nicolay, the President's secretary—sprang forward with two Pinkerton men and tried to clear the way. But the President waved them aside and went forward on his own, stopping to shake a hand here, or pat a child's head there.

John, hurrying with Captain McIntosh to expedite the switching operations, could see the President's head towering above the crowd, as he made his way with difficulty across the platform.

At last the President mounted to the back platform of the Hanover Branch train.

"Speech! speech!" cried voices from the crowd.

"Tell us a story, Abe," shouted a man far back in the crowd.

The President held up his hand for silence.

"Friends," he said, "first I want to thank you for the welcome you have given me. Sometimes, down in Washington, I think maybe I haven't got any friends. But when I get away from the politicians, out into the country, I get to think different." He stopped for a moment and looked at Captain Eckert standing on the step below him. "My friend here, the Captain of the railroad, is anxious to get going. I know how he feels—I used to be a railroad man myself out in Illinois. He's afraid I won't be on time for my engagement in Gettysburg. Well, I'm going to tell him a story that I told this morning in Washington, when everybody was trying to make me hurry up."

The crowd cheered. This was just what they wanted—one of Abe Lincoln's famous stories.

"A man was going to be hanged. The cart that he was riding in had trouble getting

through the crowd. At last the condemned man stood up in the cart and made a speech to the crowd. 'Don't be in such a hurry to get there, friends,' he said. 'The show won't begin until I arrive.' "

The crowd cheered and roared with laughter.

The President bowed, and went into the car. He had to stoop a little to get through the door.

Captain Eckert ran up to the engine. In his hands were the two tightly rolled white flags which he had received from Captain McIntosh. He unfurled them and inserted them in the two sockets on either side of the head end of the locomotive.

"All aboard," he roared.

The passengers scrambled hurriedly onto the train.

As the last passenger got aboard, Captain Eckert swung to the steps of the first car and gave his driver the high ball.

The President's Special was on its way to Gettysburg.

White Flag Special

Ordinarily, as soon as a train left a station, the conductor's duty was to go through the cars picking up tickets. Today, of course, there were no tickets to be collected. But Captain Eckert made his tour just the same to see that everything was in order.

The first car directly behind the locomotive was the combination coach and baggage car. There were people all over the place in the baggage section.

First of all there was a whole company of Marines. They were the President's Honor Guard. They were lounging around stretched out on the floor at ease, their belts and bay-

GARDA

onets lying beside them, their stiff-braided caps perched on top. Many of them were asleep. Others were gathered around in a circle, using a chicken crate for a card table, and playing a game of penny ante. Most of the guns were stacked in one corner.

The big side doors on each side of the car were open just a crack and beside each door were two men, guns ready and bayonets fixed, keeping a wary eye on the crowds that were strung out all along the tracks as the train high-tailed along.

In one corner of the car there were four men in civilian clothes. The two older men were sitting on big black boxes like suitcases, marked with white letters. "Gardner" was written on one, and "Bachrach" on the other. These were the names of famous war photographers. Everybody knew how they had gone right up on the battlefields with their cameras and taken pictures of fighting, right in the face of gunfire. Gardner had been the assistant to Matthew Brady. Brady was the

most famous of all. John wondered why he wasn't there, himself.

The two younger men were sitting on the floor, keeping an eye on the equipment—the big cameras, carefully wrapped in black cloths and rubber ponchos, and the tripods.

All four were rather sloppily, even shabbily dressed. Gardner had on a sort of dirty white duster instead of a coat, and one of the assistants was wearing a grimy leather apron very much like a blacksmith's. They all looked tired and certainly, none of them looked prosperous.

Captain Eckert thought to himself that there couldn't be much money in this photography business. He was somewhat surprised, for Mrs. Eckert had paid a pretty penny for the picture of President Lincoln by Brady which she had bought for John on his last birthday. It showed the President sitting in a chair with a piece of paper in his hand. Now that John had seen the President, he thought the picture didn't do him justice. It had a sort of slicked-up look that wasn't very natural,

and it didn't have that typical smile in the eyes. Maybe that was the kind of thing a camera couldn't get. For the first time John realized that photography must be a hard job. That might be one of the reasons that these fellows all looked so tired.

Besides the photographers and the Marines there were a few big heavy-set men with suspicious bulges under their wide-skirted coats. They sported all kinds of flowing mustaches and sideburns and beards but somehow they all looked alike and they were all standing, balancing themselves on their big feet as the car swayed. On John's list of passengers were a group put down as Pinkerton men without special names. These must be they.

Captain Eckert stepped through the door into the coach section. The front part had been taken over by the members of the Germania Maennerchor, a well-known singing society of Baltimore. They were coming to Gettysburg to furnish music for the dedication. A local quartet from the First Baptist Church was going to render a dirge, espe-

cially written for the occasion, but the Baltimoreans were to be the chief vocalists. They were going to sing an ode, the words of which had been written by the Honorable Benjamin B. French, Superintendent of Buildings of Washington, D.C. All the most famous poets had been invited to write the words of this ode—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and William Cullen Bryant and James Greenleaf Whittier, but they had all declined. A strange, wild sort of a fellow who was an Army nurse, and who thought of himself as a poet, who signed his name "Walt" Whitman, had offered, but no one had paid much attention. When the Honorable Mr. French came up with fourteen verses, the Committee decided that was enough.

Most of these gentlemen singers were exercising their voices at this very moment, some of them just making "mi-mi-mi-mis" or humming scales. A double quartet had gotten together about halfway down the car and just at this moment were making a fine show with *My Darling Clementine.*

The noise of singing was all mixed up with the loud voices of a bunch of men having a heated argument at the back of the car.

Two men were standing in the aisle. Their argument was so hot that they were shaking their fists at one another. John walked toward them.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," he said, in his calmest, most polite voice.

The man with his back to him wheeled threateningly. John recognized him at once. He was Colonel John W. Forney who wrote signed articles for the captain's favorite paper, the *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal.* Colonel Forney had ridden with the captain before.

Immediately when he saw the conductor standing behind him, his whole manner changed. He was at once affable and charming, as he smiled and put out his hand.

"Well, Captain Eckert," he said. "What a pleasure to have you as the skipper." He shook John's hand warmly. "This is a great occasion, Captain. Wonderful for us to have

our man on board." On Colonel Forney's last trip he had given his opinion of Lincoln which was of the highest order. He evidently had taken it for granted that John had agreed with him though Captain Eckert had hardly had a chance to say a word, so eloquent had been the colonel.

"Did you ever see a man of such simplicity and understanding?" he continued. "A man with such dignity and still with the common touch?"

"He certainly knows how to handle people," said John. "He certainly helped me to get away from that crowd at the station all right."

"My colleagues and I were having a few words on the subject," said Colonel Forney. He spoke in a very loud voice and looked around him challengingly. "Some of them don't share my admiration for our President. But you'll see. We'll be still prouder of him tomorrow after he's made his speech."

"Don't count your chickens before they're hatched, Jack," said one of the other news-

men, who was lounging in one of the seats. "Look at that speech at Antietam—that was a bust if there ever was one. My paper didn't even report it verbatim. They wanted to keep it quiet, that the President of the United States told funny stories at a time like that."

"You New York people think you're the whole U.S.A., Whitey," chimed in a great mountain of a man who had perched himself on the back of one of the seats, with his feet on the red plush seat. This was Ben: Perley Poore, a writer well known for his news stories in *Leslie's Weekly*. "You know there's more to this country than just little old New York. Plenty of people in other places didn't take the same attitude about that Antietam business."

"Not in Washington," said a woman's voice. John looked around startled. He was surprised to see a woman sitting there with all these men, and she didn't look a bit out of place. She was sedate and middle-aged, in a neat plum-colored bonnet and plain, almost mannish, cashmere dress, with very

little trimming. She didn't even have on hoops. The men around all seemed to be very respectful to her, and quieted down when she spoke.

"On our paper," the lady went on, "we took much the same view as the New York papers, except that we reported the incident fully. We felt that the public had a right to know what kind of man they had unfortunately put in the White House."

"That's just the trouble, Amelia," said Colonel Forney. "You people in Washington are too close to the politicians. You don't reflect the people. Too much social stuff going on, and it's all too personal. It takes people like us out in the back country to tell you Washingtonians and these Gotham dandies what the people of the whole U.S.A. are thinking."

"Looks like the brass collars in high office agree with Whitey," chimed in another reporter. "Notice that Stanton isn't on this train, nor Thaddeus Stevens neither."

"Listen, those two are smart politicians.

They figure that Lincoln hasn't got a Chinaman's chance to be re-elected and they're not going to tie up with him at this point. They're willing to leave loyalty and dignity to men like Seward and his like." This from the man they called Whitey. "Even Greeley isn't going to back him."

"They say in Washington," put in the lady, "when Stanton told Stevens that Secretary Seward was coming along on this trip, he said, 'That's fine. Lincoln and Seward are dead ducks. Let the dead bury the dead.' "

Mr. Eckert thought that this story was in very poor taste, and even worse, coming from a lady. But then he supposed a woman who would go into such work as newspapering couldn't have very delicate feelings. She seemed too mannish to him, anyway. It was all right for women to go without hoops when they were doing housework, but he figured that a lady on an occasion like this ought to put on her best. Anyway, looking at her he doubted if she ever did any housework, and couldn't imagine her over a kitchen stove

getting a man's supper ready for him. He was sure sorry for her husband's stomach.

He must remember to tell Mrs. Eckert about this discussion. This reporter was the first of the "new" women he'd ever seen, except for the ladies who were working for the Sanitary Commission. They always seemed sort of "forward" to him, too, but they were engaged in errands of mercy, a much more womanly type of work than mixing with all sorts, like a newspaperwoman had to.

"Well, maybe Stanton's right," said Poore, "from *his* viewpoint. I don't go along with him or his crowd in their demand that all Southerners be looked on as rebels and that when we win the war they should all be treated like traitors. I'm all for Lincoln's point of view, that we're all Americans just with a different slant on things, and that in a place like the United States, there's room for disagreement."

"There are people who think Lincoln doesn't go nearly far enough," said Forney. "They'd like to see us back down and put a

stop to the war on any terms. Copperheads, that's what they are, just Copperheads."

"Well, Old Abe's got his work cut out for him," said one of the other men. "Better stop thinking about stories and begin mending his political fences if he wants to get re-elected."

John's head was spinning with all the talk. He'd always thought of newspaper people as knowing so much. If they were so smart, why didn't they look out of the windows and see the crowds lined up all along the right of way. All those people were proof of what the everyday citizen thought about the President. They looked on him as their leader, the man who was going to save the Union and the liberty, for which the Founding Fathers had fought.

Maybe their fathers had been just immigrants like John's father, but they'd come to America to enjoy that freedom and they thought of Washington and Jefferson and the rest just like members of their own families, even if they weren't related to them.

But newspapering wasn't John's business. He had his own job to do. He walked down the aisle through the back door and out onto the car platform.

The President's Car

Captain Eckert still had the rear-end car to go through—the President's car. He put his hand on the catch of the door to open it. Then he took his hand away again, and stood for a moment on the platform, hanging onto the handrail.

Before he went into the President's car, John wanted to do a little thinking.

He certainly hoped that the President didn't know that all those unkind things were being said about him right on this train. It might take his mind off other things he had to do—important things.

The most important of all was to allow him to keep his mind on winning the war.

Of course John knew that there were people—good people, too—who thought the President was wrong because he insisted on unconditional surrender. They said, what difference did it make?—let the Northern States go one way and let the Southern States do what they wanted to. It wouldn't make much difference. Not even if the States out West wanted to go a third way. There was plenty of room for three nations instead of just only one United States—a Northern Union, a Southern Confederacy and a Western Federation. To John, this sounded almost like treason, and he'd heard that the President thought, too, that it was treason.

Thousands of men had been killed in this war, and in other wars before this one, just so that there could *be* a United States. And you couldn't give up now—it wouldn't be fair to them.

Of course, the war had been going better for the Union ever since last July Fourth. That was the day that Meade had turned back Lee's army at Gettysburg and Grant had

cleared the Mississippi by taking Vicksburg. But even so, things weren't really sure. The battle of Antietam had proved that.

Mr. Lincoln didn't seem to be able to find the right kind of Generals. The Rebels had good ones—Lee and Stonewall Jackson and Beauregard. But except for Grant and Sherman in the West, the President seemed to have to do all the thinking for his commanders. They were slow as molasses, and only went into military action when they were pushed into it.

McClellan had been one of the worst, and now they were talking about making him President of the United States. John thought he certainly wouldn't make any kind of a President; he hadn't even been able to win a battle with the whole Army of the Potomac at his command.

To be President of the United States, that was a big job. That meant living in the White House, and doing the things that had been done by Washington and Jefferson, and Monroe and Madison. Yes, it was up to the Presi-

dent to see that the country that they had founded kept on being a going concern.

It had always seemed to John that there was something sacred and hallowed about just being President—that the *Office* should be respected by people—even people who hadn't voted for the *man.* And he intended to keep on feeling that way, no matter what these know-it-all newspapermen said.

He shook his head, took a deep breath, opened the door and went into the President's car.

The atmosphere here was quite different from that which he'd just left.

In the first seat to the right sat a very pretty young woman with a gentleman in naval uniform. This was Mrs. Wise, the daughter of Edward Everett, the orator. Just back of Mrs. Wise was a whole crowd of men conferring and whispering together. Most of them were fashionably, almost flamboyantly dressed, and they sported all kinds of tonsorial splendor—handlebar mustaches, Dundreary weepers, flowing beards and chin fringes. They

seemed to be discussing very important subjects, and every now and then one of them would glance toward the back of the car where the President sat, or look around to see that no one was listening.

These men, thought John, must be the politicians. Just back of the politicians, but not taking part in their conversation, John recognized William Seward by his long hair and his clean-shaven face. With him was a churchman, the Reverend Thomas Stockton, chaplain of the House of Representatives, who was to deliver the invocation next day. And opposite to Mr. Seward and the chaplain was a group of foreigners. One of the gentlemen had waxed mustaches and a goatee, and looked so much like the Emperor Napoleon III that John knew he must be the French Minister, Monsieur Mercier. Madame Mercier was there, too. John took a quick look at her forward-tilted, feathered hat, the ruffles on her satin dress, and her beautiful cashmere shawl, so he could report to Mrs. Eckert.

The two little Merciers, a boy and a girl, sat stiffly and correctly behind their parents. The little girl was dressed almost exactly like her mama. The little boy had on a starched Eton collar and a round, tight black jacket. They both looked like small copies of grown people, and certainly were on their best behavior.

There were half a dozen generals in full uniform, sitting stiff and correct behind the diplomatic corps. Then there were a few empty seats—and then the President.

When John first came into the car, the only other person sitting near the President was a handsome, dark-haired, romantic looking young man with a neat, pointed beard—the President's secretary, John G. Nicolay. He was quietly reading the newspaper. Opposite him the President was writing on a little piece of paper with a stubby pencil, using his bony knee for a desk.

After a few minutes, one of the biggest, fattest politicians stood up. He pushed his

way down the car past Mr. Eckert and stopped right next to the President.

Nicolay got up. "Can I do something for you, Mr. Lamon?" he asked.

Lamon didn't say anything. He just ducked his head in the direction of the President.

Lincoln pushed his spectacles down to the end of his nose and looked up from his writing.

"Well, Ward?" he said, with a question in his voice.

The big fat man was Ward Hill Lamon, a powerful Pennsylvania politician and the go-between for Governor Curtin and the anti-Lincoln faction.

"If you have time now, Mr. President," he said, in a booming Fourth-of-July-speech voice, so that everybody in the car could hear him, "I'd like to talk to you about that Post Office appointment for a certain man."

"Well," said the President, "I had wanted to go over those remarks that I'm going to make tomorrow. I didn't have much chance to work over them before I left—lot of last-

minute things came up, and Mrs. Lincoln was a good deal worried about our little boy Tad having the fever—but just the same . . ." He took off his glasses and stuffed them into his inside coat pocket along with the two little pieces of paper on which he had been writing. "I can do that later. I figure this is as good a time as any for a conference."

Lamon sat down next to Mr. Lincoln, and the two put their heads together. They were a funny pair—Lincoln, big, rough-cut, with rumpled hair and a grizzled beard, and Lamon, round and smooth all over, with popping eyes, and an enormous, blondish, handlebar mustache.

John continued on down the aisle. Through the glass in the rear door, outside on the platform, he could see the squat, squarish figure of the detective with the round pork pie hat—Mr. Allan Pinkerton.

John turned and went forward again to the baggage car. After what he'd seen and heard, he wondered more than ever how the President ever got time to do his own work.

The Arrival

The bell in the depot tower at Gettysburg was ringing like mad when the train came whistling in. The waiting crowd cheered, and the brass band on the station platform struck up *Columbia the Gem of the Ocean.* They played it over and over again. They were reading the music from little sheets stuck in the holders on their instruments, and they didn't seem to want to take time to stop and change to another tune.

John could see the whole thing from the top step of the first car where he stood hand-signaling the "Slow Down" to the engine driver.

Right next to the track were the town dignitaries—Burgess Martin and the Town Councilors, and Mr. Wills and the Reverend Baugher, president of the College. And there were twelve or fifteen prominent citizens who were going to play host to the visitors from Washington.

Well up in front were the ladies of the Sanitary Commission in their gray dresses and white caps. Right next to them was a double file of small children, each carrying a little American flag. In charge were Miss Sally and Miss Mary, the grade school teachers, who were buzzing around, keeping them in line. Miss Sally held a tiny little girl firmly by the hand. The little girl stumbled about half blinded by the enormous bunch of red roses she was carrying.

Swisher was right there, too. For once he wore his coat and the regulation cap with a visor.

When John saw the station agent he wondered who was up in the tower. He couldn't see Billy anywhere so he supposed Mr.

Swisher was letting him have the fun of ringing the bell. It sounded a little uneven and wobbly!

A line of soldiers, in close formation, with bayonets fixed, formed a half circle behind this first group. Back of the soldiers the crowd of "common folk" stretched all the way to the Diamond. There were people in the windows and on the roofs of all the nearby buildings and some little boys and young men had even climbed up on the telegraph poles to get a better view.

Almost everybody was in holiday gear. Only here and there were dark spots made by women wearing long mourning veils, holding somberly dressed children by the hand. They formed little black islands in the sea of color. They were the widows and orphans of men who had fallen in the war. They had come to the station to salute the Commander-in-Chief of their soldier husbands.

There were a few other dark dresses and black coats scattered in the crowd, too. They belonged to the minister from the Church of

the Brethren in Ahrensberg and little gatherings of the "Plain People" from the Amish and Moravian communities nearby.

As the train pulled in, John could see Kneckel bursting out of the door of the depot. He hadn't dressed for the occasion, but was in his usual shirt sleeves and green eyeshade. He had a telegraph form in his hand. He struggled through the crowd, right up to the line of soldiers, and tried to force his way into the inner circle. The Lieutenant of the Military, seeing the commotion, ran to the spot. Kneckel waved the telegram. The lieutenant immediately opened up a space and let him through the guard. Untidy as he was, the telegrapher impudently shouldered his way through the well turned out "prominent citizens," until he was right next to the place where the last car would be spotted.

"It's just too bad," thought John, as he swung down from the steps to the platform and the train came to a halt, "the first person the President will see is Kneckel."

The company of Marines were already

spilling out of the side door of the baggage car. On the double they ran the length of the train and took up positions by the rear platform of the President's car. On their heels came the newspapermen and the photographers. The Germania Maennerchor climbed down and formed on the station platform beside the band.

Now swiftly, but without losing their dignity, the Washington visitors began to leave the train. The Gettysburg notables hurried to greet them ceremoniously. The crowd huzzahed and cheered as each new figure appeared. The generals, especially, got rousing welcomes.

The noise and the excitement mounted with the tension. When was the President coming?

The rear door of the last car opened at last. There was an expectant stir in the crowd. But it was only Allan Pinkerton and John Nicolay who came out and swung quickly to the station platform.

Pinkerton spoke to the Marine lieutenant,

who gave an order to his men. The Honor Guard swiftly re-deployed. At the same instant the band stopped playing, the bell was stilled, and a hush fell over the people.

Only the command of the Lieutenant rang out:

" 'Ten'shun! Present h-arrms!"

Muskets clicked sharply as his men snapped to position.

Voices of men were raised in song. It was the choir singing the words of Sir Walter Scott:

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances,
Honored and blest be the evergreen pine;
Long may the tree in his banner that glances
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line.
All Hail! All Hail! All Hail!

As the last "All Hail" re-echoed, the Chief Executive of a nation at war appeared. He stooped a little as he came through the door—maybe it was the weight of office on his shoulders, or perhaps it was only because he was so tall.

The townspeople gave him a rousing welcome.

Mr. Lincoln took off his hat, and bowed again and again.

Quick as a flash, one of the schoolmarms darted forward and hoisted the little girl, bearing the roses, up onto the lowest step of the car. The child stood there, holding the bouquet high above her head, up toward the big man towering over her. The President bent down, picked up the child, lifted her, flowers and all, and kissed her on both cheeks. Then, still holding her in his arms, he came down the steps.

He set her down on the station platform, and she ran quickly to Miss Mary and hid her face in the folds of her teacher's skirt.

There was a great commotion among the soldiers. An old man in a faded Union uniform was trying to push his way through the line of soldiers.

At a signal from Mr. Lincoln the man limped forward. With an effort he drew himself to attention and saluted. The tears were

streaming down his face and he almost sobbed out the words.

"Commander-in-Chief, my boy . . . fell at Antietam . . . devoted his life . . ."

The President stepped up to the old soldier and embraced and comforted him. The crowd fell silent. Many women dabbed at their eyes with their handkerchiefs.

At last the old man stepped back, stood up straight once more, saluted smartly, did an about-face and disappeared. The touching scene was over.

As Mr. Wills and the Burgess came forward Mr. Lincoln was already on his way toward the engine to shake hands with the driver and the fireman.

Then, with his hand outstretched, he came toward Captain Eckert who was still standing by the rear car. But before he could reach him, Mr. Lincoln was stopped by Nicolay. Of all people, it was Kneckel who was close behind. Nicolay said a few words quietly, and Kneckel handed the President the telegram he was still carrying.

Mr. Lincoln seized it eagerly and, reading it quickly, stuffed it in his pocket. Then he shook Kneckel's hand warmly, and continued on his way toward Captain Eckert.

"Well, Captain," said the President, "you've given us a good run. I hope we haven't spoiled your record by being late."

"No, sir, Mr. President," said John. "We have a good driver. He made up the time that we were delayed at the Junction." And then, to his own surprise, he heard himself add: "But on time or no, we're happy to have delivered you safely."

The President laughed. "That's quite an admission from a railroader," he said.

And the two men shook hands as though they were old friends.

At last the President was ready to meet the first citizens of Gettysburg.

Jeers and Jubilees

John got back uptown after dark. In all the houses around the square he could see lights in the dining rooms. Gettysburg was having its supper.

The lobby of the hotel was crowded with men and noisy with their talk. Mr. Eckert shouldered his way through the crowd to the taproom. The waiter in charge knew him and made a place for him at one of the tables.

"I recommend the oyster stew," he said. "We got half a dozen fresh barrels up from Baltimore and the stew is *aber goot.*"

"Stew," said Captain Eckert, nodding his

head, "and a mug of beer." He was off duty now till tomorrow and he meant to enjoy himself.

He sat down at the table, and while he waited, he looked around the room. Many of the people were out-of-towners. John recognized many of his afternoon train passengers. Right at the same table with him was a group of politicians who had made the trip with him. When he got his stone mug of beer, he politely toasted them before drinking.

And then the waiter brought a big bowl of creamy oyster stew, and John started eating in earnest. The day had been a long one, and he was hungry.

In the middle of the room, what looked like the whole of the Germania Maennerchor was sitting around a big table. Every so often, they'd put their beer mugs down on the table top and circle them around. Then they'd lift them up, hold them out toward one another, and shout, "Hoch!" And then down would go the beer in one big, long

swallow. The waiters would grab up the mugs and rush off for refills. Then the singers would rest their elbows on the table, and break into song. They sang *The Old Gray Mare Came out of the Wilderness*—which was rather confusing because a few of them sang different words—*Old Abe Lincoln Came out of the Wilderness.* But when they sang *Old Black Joe* or *When the Corn is Waving, Annie Dear* or *Won't You Tell Me Why, Robin?* they harmonized, and the songs sounded beautiful. When they sang *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Are Marching* they beat on the table in time with their fists or their mugs which made it really sound like soldiers marching. Then they tried *The Star-Spangled Banner* but it was too much for them, and they broke up, laughing.

Once they all stood up together and sang the favorite anthem, *Hail, Columbia,* and everybody else in the room stood up and joined in singing with them.

After that they quieted down a bit and had another round of beer. While they were

drinking, one member of the Maennerchor got up, and sitting on the back of a chair with his feet on the seat, began to sing a sad solo that began, "Raise High the Monumental Pile." Silence immediately settled over the whole room, for everyone recognized this song which was all about Jennie Wade, the heroine of Gettysburg. Jennie was the only woman who had lost her life during the battle, and this song seemed to set the tap-room crowd to thinking about the dedication the next day and the solemn occasion they were honoring.

But the crowd couldn't remain sad very long and the song was hardly ended before someone struck up *Balm of Gilead,* at which the whole room started to re-echo with its jolly jingle:

Here's to so-and-so,
Drink him down,
Drink him down,

and the place rocked with gaiety once more.

Over in one corner was a table of news-

papermen. They didn't take part in the singing for they were doing a lot of talking and arguing, and were making a lot of noise on their own. Right in the middle of all the good cheer, one of them suddenly started to pound on the table with his fist, and springing up, started taking off his coat. At the same moment, a second man jumped up on the table and threw off his coat, too.

Like everybody else in the room, Captain Eckert looked around to see what was going on.

He didn't recognize the first man, but the man up on the table was Colonel Forney, the firebrand from Lancaster.

It looked, for sure, as though there was going to be a fight.

But before a blow could be exchanged, the men at the table sprang between the two. John Nicolay pulled Forney down from the table and, taking his arm, dragged him, protesting, from the room.

The politicians at John's table seemed to know what it was all about.

"A Copperhead!" exclaimed one of the politicians.

"Must've said something pretty hot about Old Abe," said the second man.

"Don't have to say much to get Forney riled," said another. "He's a great Lincoln man, but he's so hotheaded he's always looking for trouble."

By this time Captain Eckert had finished his supper. He paid his bill and went out into the square. The dining room windows were dark now, but the parlors were all aglow. In the Wills house opposite, there was a light on the second floor, too. It shone from the room that had been set aside for the President.

From where John stood on the hotel steps, he could just faintly make out the shadow of a big man sitting, writing. John figured that the President must be working on the speech that he had put aside on the train that afternoon.

A man came out of the door, and stood next to him smoking a cigar. John hated the smell

of tobacco so he moved over a few steps, but the man moved over after him.

"Evenin', Captain," he said. The captain didn't recognize the voice which was kind of muffled because of the cigar in his mouth.

John looked around. It was Kneckel. He looked sleepier than ever, and the long stogie stuck at an angle in the corner of his mouth, didn't add to his looks.

Captain Eckert mumbled a greeting, and got ready to move on.

"Looks like the President's up there working," said Kneckel. He took the cigar out of his mouth and blew a few puffs. "He's a man with the patience of Job," he went on. "Who'd know from the way he acted down at the station this afternoon all he had on his mind."

"Being President's a hard job," John said. "Takes a lot of doing."

"It ain't only being President that's on his mind," said Kneckel. "It's private worries he's got, too." He looked at the cigar in his hand. "The way he kissed that little girl this after-

noon, you could tell he loves children. And he's had nothing but bad luck with his own."

"Not all of them," said the captain. "The boy Robert's doing all right up there at West Point, and they say he gets a load of satisfaction out of his boy Tad."

"Yes," said Kneckel, "but he's lost two of them, one before he came to be President, and just last winter, Willie, with the scarlet fever. Mighty hard on him. I lost one of my own last winter while I was away with the Army in Virginia. It was worse than the fightin'."

The captain looked at Kneckel with new interest. He had never thought of him as a family man.

"Seems like I worry twice as much about the others," said Kneckel. "Just like the President's worrying about his Tad."

"What do you mean?" asked John.

"Well," said Kneckel, "that young secretary of the President's came down to the telegraph office earlier this evening to send some dispatches to Washington. And right in the

middle of all this official business he sent a message to the secretary in Washington—Hay, his name is—asking for a report on Tad. I couldn't help asking what was the matter. Nicolay told me the little boy was sick when the President left home—had a high fever—and the doctors didn't know what was the matter. He had kinda hoped that telegram I had for him at the station was from Mrs. Lincoln. Any other man could have stayed at home when he had a sick child. But not a President—not Old Abe. He's just like a soldier. He had to pick himself up and come here the way he promised, and make speeches, and shake hands, and do the polite to people who don't give a hoot for him, and all the time his heart's down there in Washington, next to that little boy."

"I didn't know that," said John. "I guess nobody knows it. I don't believe I could do it if my little Johnny was sick."

"But you ain't the President," said Kneckel. "It's bein' like that that makes a man be *able* to be President. But something good

happened," he added. "That's why I'm here right this minute, 'stead of being at home. Just before I left down there a message came through. Lots of official stuff and so forth—answers to Nicolay. Ordinarily, I'd have sent them up with Billy and take myself off home. But there was a message about the young 'un. He's better. The fever's gone down and he's sleeping sound. I brought that up with my own two hands," he went on. "Right up to Mr. Wills' house and I wouldn't give it to nobody but Nicolay." He looked at the toe of his shoe. "Guess you ought to know what made me think of doing that—you carried a message for the President once when you didn't need to. I sure admired you for doing that."

"And what did Nicolay do?" asked John.

"He looked at it and when he come to the part about Tad, he said, 'This'll take a load off the President's mind. He'll be mighty grateful to you for bringing this up quick,' and he asked my name so he could tell the President. The President likes to know who

his friends are, this young fellow said. Then he went off as quick as he could to take the dispatch to his chief, and I came over here. So now *he's* got a free mind to think about what he's going to say tomorrow."

"It won't make no never mind what *he* says tomorrow," another voice broke in. John and Kneckel turned. There was Mr. Swisher, who had drifted up unnoticed, while they were talking. "Old Abe's only going to make a few remarks. It's Edward Everett from Boston who's going to deliver the oration."

Swisher had a half smile on his face. Evidently he enjoyed needling Kneckel.

"Look, Mr. Mugwump, I wish you'd get down off your fence on one side or t'other," said Kneckel harshly.

"Well, you don't need to get so nasty about it," said Mr. Swisher. "It's true. And the Reverend Everett don't do things by halves. He's been here two days now and he's been going around the battlefield every day. Says he wants to get the *feel* of the

battle into his words. There's a real orator for you!"

Kneckel snorted and chewed on his cigar. "Maybe so," he said, "maybe so. But the Reverend's been backing and filling and writing and changing that there oration for three months now. If he ain't got the feel after all that while, he'll never get it. Take the President, now—he, you might say, only just got invited the other day."

"I don't see how he gets to write anything at all," John put in, "with all the other things he's got on his mind. And from what I saw going on on the train today, they don't let him be to himself for a minute at a time—somebody's always bothering him."

"He'll be all right," said Kneckel. "He don't have to go around getting the feel of battlefields. He knows what a battlefield is like. He's been right there on a battlefield when the fightin's going on. He's seen 'em losin' and he's seen 'em winnin'—right from Bull Run on. Yep! Maybe he ain't such a

spellbinder as your Reverend, Mr. Station Agent. But whatever he says—he'll make sense."

"You sure got it bad," said Mr. Swisher.

"Maybe it's because he was in the fighting himself," said John. "It never struck me before, but he's sort of like most of the soldiers that rode my train."

"We're the rank and file," said Kneckel. "Old Abe once said that God must love the common people—he made so many of them. Yes, sir, he's the man for folks like me—common people."

"There's a lot of common people around here that don't seem to think like you," said Swisher, nodding his head toward some men who came reeling into the square out of one of the side streets. "Look at that bunch there. They've been all over town tonight. Listen to them. Know what they're singing?"

"Sounds like *John Brown's Body* to me."

"Is that so?" said Swisher. "You got the right tune, but you got the wrong words. You don't listen good. Listen again."

John did as he was told. Swisher was right. Those men were singing *John Brown's Body* but with different words—mean words, insulting words:

Hang Abe Lincoln on a sour apple tree,
Hang Abe Lincoln on a sour apple tree,
Hang Abe Lincoln on a sour apple tree,
And the boys'll come marching home.

They sang it over and over again. They crossed the square, and several gaudily dressed women came out from dark corners and joined them.

"Characters like that have been drifting into town for the last two days," said Kneckel. "First thing you know there'll be trouble and somebody'll get hurt."

"Who's going to hurt them—you?" said Swisher, evidently enjoying himself. "And who else?"

"Copperheads! They ought to be locked up," said Kneckel angrily.

"Now, now," said John, trying to make things all right. "There's nothing to get ex-

cited about. You wouldn't lock up a man just for singing something you don't like, would you? That ain't the way we do things here in these United States, even in war times. I always tell my boy, Johnny, 'sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never do it.'"

As the rowdies weaved their way toward the Wills house, their bellowing got louder and louder and the telegrapher got more and more excited.

"Look at them Marines," he said. "Wouldn't you think they'd do something?"

The Marines were walking sentry up and down, just as though nothing were happening.

The Lieutenant stood quietly by the door of the Wills house, alert but calm.

Out of the side door of the Wills home came young Nicolay. He stopped to speak to the lieutenant. Was he instructing the military to interfere?

But the secretary paused for only a moment. Then he walked swiftly in the direc-

tion of the house next door where Mr. Seward was visiting.

The singers had crossed the square, and were right in front of the Wills house. They couldn't get any farther than the curb because of the patrolling Marines. They stopped there. They'd lost the tune. They were practically shouting out the ugly words right under the President's window.

"That crowd's as bad as traitors," said Kneckel. "For two cents I'd go over and give one of 'em a wallop."

As the racket in the square mounted, there was an answering hullabaloo in the hotel lobby. Colonel Forney, with half a dozen men behind him, came bursting through the door.

The colonel had shed his coat and he was rolling up his sleeves, getting ready for action.

They came headlong toward the three railroaders. Swisher ducked. He was out of the way before they reached him. But Kneckel took his cigar out of his mouth,

threw it on the pavement, and started running right along beside Colonel Forney, shouting and shaking his fists with the rest, as they hurried toward the Wills house.

Only John stood his ground. The little band passed around him as they dashed across the square, leaving him standing alone.

"Stupid fools," said Swisher. He'd taken refuge behind a pillar of the porch. "What's the good of a fight?" He came out from his hiding place and put his hand on John's arm. "Let's get outa here," he said. "This ain't our business, it's just politics."

The things that John had heard and seen that day flashed through his mind. He threw off Swisher's detaining hand.

"Get out of my way, Swisher," he said. "If you wanna know, politics is everybody's business."

He started running too, and the next thing he knew John was in the middle of the muddle, right in front of the Wills house.

Nothing to Say

John found himself in the center of the pushing, shoving crowd. Colonel Forney was everywhere, still waving and shouting and looking for someone to slug. But as yet no one had actually started swinging. The Marines still weren't doing any mixing in. But they had stopped patrolling and were lined up along the curb, shoulder to shoulder, with their guns held across their chests at "Port Arms."

A local policeman had appeared from nowhere.

"Take it easy! Take it easy!" he kept saying, but he only made matters worse, shoul-

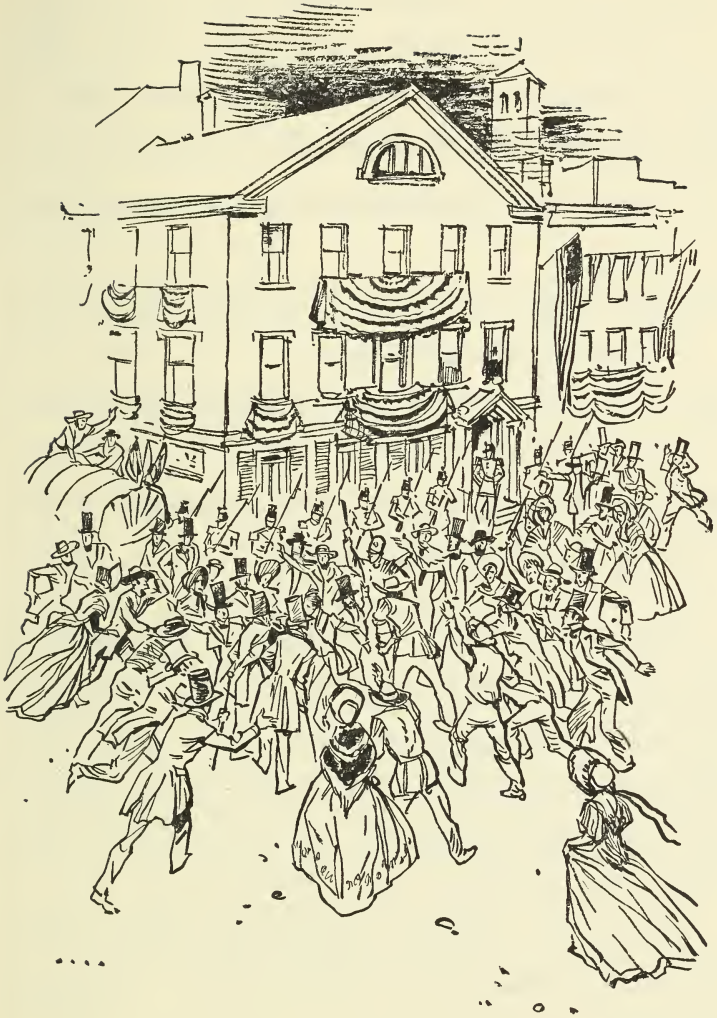
dering his way about and jostling people. Tempers were getting shorter and shorter. Colonel Forney had found someone as cocky as himself, and had his fists up and was already dancing around and yelling and sparring, all squared away for battle.

It looked as though there was really going to be a nasty mixup. Then above all the confusion came the sound of men singing.

This was no mocking barroom tune they sang—it was the stirring air which had rallied thousands of recruits to their country's call:

We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more,
From Mississippi's winding stream and from New England's shore;
We leave our plows and workshops, our wives and children dear
With hearts too full for utterance, with but a silent tear.

It was the Germania Maennerchor! They had come out of the hotel and were marching across the square, singing as they came.



In a moment, those who had been ready to fight were caught up in the music, the combatants locked arms, and every man in the throng took up the familiar song.

We dare not look behind us, but steadfastly before.
We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more.
We are coming, we are coming, our Union to restore,
We are coming, Father Ab'ram, with three hundred thousand more.

The crowd parted and the choir passed through. And as the music ended they stood in orderly ranks along the curb under the President's window, where lately an unruly mob had milled about. The last words of the song were followed by cheers.

"Come out, Father Abraham!" There were shouts and cheers and demands for "Speech! Speech!"

The second story window shade flew up

and there stood the President. He threw open the sash and leaned out over the sill.

John caught his breath. He couldn't help thinking what a perfect target for a potshot the President made, his shape outlined by the light behind him.

But this didn't seem to worry Lincoln. He just held up his big hand for silence.

"I appear before you fellow citizens merely to thank you for this compliment," he began. "The inference is a very fair one that you would hear me for a little while at least, were I to commence to make a speech. I do not appear before you for the purpose of doing so, and for several substantial reasons. The most substantial of these is that I have no speech to make. In my position it is sometimes important that I should not say any foolish things."

"If you can help it," yelled a man in the crowd.

The President answered the man directly.

"It very often happens that the only way

to help it is to say nothing at all. Believing that is my present condition this evening, I must beg of you to excuse me from addressing you further."

He stopped and drew in his head. Then he slammed down the window and pulled down the shade.

It had all happened so quickly that the people in the square didn't know what to make of it. After a minute there were some cheers and a boo or two.

The President's words, and the way he had spoken certainly took the crowd by surprise.

At some time during the excitement, Captain Eckert and Kneckel had found one another. While the President spoke, they had stood together. As the window shade was pulled down, Kneckel grabbed hold of John's arm. "Good grief," he said, "what in the name of heaven got into him? First thing you know, trouble'll start up again."

But nothing happened. The crowd took their spanking good-naturedly as just an-

other evidence of Old Abe's plain speaking. Convinced that this was the end of the excitement in the square, they drifted away up Hanover Street, singing patriotic songs.

John and Kneckel stood still till the sound of singing died away.

Out of the next house came two men. They crossed the square to the side door of the Wills house, their footsteps echoing in the quiet night. It was Secretary Seward with young Nicolay.

The Marine lieutenant saluted as they went in.

A few moments later, the watchers below could see new shadows in the room on the second floor.

"Maybe he's talking about his speech with Seward," said Kneckel. "They're good friends."

John looked up at the window, trying to guess what was going on behind the drawn shade.

"Well, Captain," said Kneckel after a

while, "I guess tonight's show's over. How about going on down to the depot? I gotta relieve Weinbrenner."

John nodded. He'd just noticed the condition of his clothes. His shirt was ripped and he'd lost his stiff collar. Lucky for him he'd brought a clean one for tomorrow. He still had on his topper, but the fuzz was all rubbed up and it would take a lot of brushing to make it right again. And his conductor's badge was gone from the front of his hat! Then he remembered he'd taken it off before he had come up to the hotel. He reached into his coattail pocket. It was there, safe and sound. He couldn't see his shoes in the dark, but he could guess what they looked like after all those people had walked over them. He'd have to get up good and early tomorrow morning and give them a polishing. Well, it had been worth it. But he'd better get some sleep now, while he could.

The two men started walking toward the station. It was getting cold. These Novem-

ber nights were frosty. John shivered a little and turned up the collar of his coat.

The clock in the tower of the Lutheran Church began booming the first strokes of midnight.

Parade

It was still dark when John woke the next morning. He'd spent the night on a shakedown up in the little room on the second floor of the station.

The first thing he saw when he opened his eyes was his shoes, all scuffed up and dirty, on the floor, and his coat and his torn shirt on a broken-down chair beside the bed.

So he hadn't been dreaming after all. The fight was real. At first he couldn't recall exactly what had happened, and then, little by little, he remembered.

People had said bad things about President Lincoln and he had jumped right in

with Kneckel and gotten into a fight. What would Mrs. Eckert say about his torn shirt? She'd certainly scold. Well, let her scold. He wasn't a bit ashamed. He was glad he'd done it.

But right now he'd better wake up quick and get going. He had his job to do.

He sat up, put on his socks, slipped his feet into his shoes, pulled up his pants and hoisted his galluses over his shoulders. He took his clean shirt under his arm and in his undershirt, groped his way down the narrow steps.

The waiting room was cold, but someone had started a small fire already in the pot-bellied stove—probably Kneckel. But John could see Kneckel sitting in the office, hunched up over the telegraph instrument in the bay window with a lighted lamp beside him, just as though he hadn't moved all night. Well, thought John, the fire couldn't have made itself. He opened the stove door and gave the wood a helpful poke.

John washed up and put on his shirt and

went into the office. The heat was stifling. The fire must have been kept up all night. By now, Kneckel was standing beside the stove. He had a big black coffeepot in one hand and a mug in the other.

"Made some coffee," he said. "How about a cup? And there's a couple of eggs in the pot. Fish one out with that spoon if you want it."

He didn't say a word about the night before. He just put the coffeepot back on the top of the stove, handed John the mug and the spoon, and went over to his stool in the window.

After John finished his egg and coffee, he went upstairs through the chilly hall to the cold room, and really got busy on his uniform. He shined his shoes, brushed all the dents out of his hat, burnished up his captain's badge, put on his clean shirt and his fresh stiff collar.

By the time he came downstairs, he was the perfect picture of a model train conductor.

He started walking up the track toward the Wye. By this time there was a crack of dawn over in the east. But there wasn't any real sun because the sky was overcast. Right at the corner of the station he met Weinbrenner. He was coming on to relieve Kneckel.

The two men exchanged good mornings.

Halfway up to the Wye, a man, swinging a lighted lantern, came toward him. It was the night watchman from the train.

"Good morning, Fidler," said John. "Looks like rain."

"Been like this since four o'clock," said the man. "Too bad, and all these people here for the dedication."

"Well, you know the saying," said John. "Rain before seven, clear before eleven."

Fidler looked up at the sky.

"Mebbe," he said. "Might be it'll hold. Or mebbe it'll roll over by the time the crowds get to the cemetery. Too bad if they have to parade in the rain."

"Which of my crew's come on?" asked the captain.

"The brakeman," said Fidler, "and I seen the fireman, the engine driver, and his helper, comin' across the field when I left. I lighted out as soon as the first one come. I want to catch a coupla hours sleep and maybe I'll get to take my family out to the dedication."

"Go right along," said the captain. He appreciated the deference that Fidler had showed his position as a senior railroader. He continued walking up the track toward the train.

When he got to the warehouse where the train was standing, he saw that all his crew had come on and were hard at work. It was a good crew. They were going about their jobs just the way they did every morning. He was proud of them.

He made a sudden resolution. He walked over to the engineer who was polishing brass.

"Look here, Ed," he said. "I've been figuring maybe I could fix it some way so that

you and the boys could get out to the dedication."

Ed stared at him. It wasn't like the captain to make such a suggestion. He was generally pretty strict about staying around according to regulations.

"Seems to me," John went on, "that we could take turns and turn about down here. Dave and Fred and Dan (they were the brakemen) could go up with me to the square and see the President review the parade. That'd give you and Jake a chance to finish fueling and taking on water and then we could come back, and you fellows could go out to the cemetery, and hightail it back afterwards. The schedule doesn't call for pulling out till 6:30 so that gives us a margin."

The engineer took off his cap and scratched his head. "By cricky, Captain, that certainly sounds fine to me. I'd sure like to see that dedication and tell my kids about it. And the rest of the boys feel the same way, I'll be bound."

"Well, I figure," said John, "that every one of us has a right to get to see the President some if we can. It don't happen every day. You pass the word along, Ed, will you?" He walked away a few steps and then came back. "Tell you what, Ed, if the trainmen move quick, we'll be all cleaned up by the time the parade starts, and those two can go on out to the cemetery, too."

The engineer rubbed his chin. "But there won't be anybody on duty here at the train," he said. "You can't have that, can you?"

"I'll come back myself," said John. "Bein' the captain I get to see the President on the train. I got real close to him on the up run, and I seen him last night. Yes, I'll come on duty and you boys can go on out to the dedication. That's set." And he walked away.

By 7:55 John and the brakemen set out for the square.

The parade was to begin at eight o'clock.

All along the curb on both sides there were victorias and surreys and phaetons filled with

BAKE

ladies and gentlemen who were going to ride in the parade behind the President.

Mr. Lincoln was already there in front of the Wills house on horseback ready for the review. The President was dressed just the way he was the evening before except that he was wearing white gloves. Sitting there with his knees sticking out, he seemed much too big for his horse. It looked as though if he straightened out his legs, his feet would be right on the pavement.

"If Old Abe wanted to walk to the dedication," laughed a farmer near John, "he could do it without gettin' off of that sorry critter."

Governor Curtin and Secretary Seward and a staff of notables were lined up on horses behind the President.

Around the corner Brigadier General Darius Couch came galloping, astride a fine white horse. He pulled up short in front of the President. The animal reared and pranced just like a circus performer. The general managed his reins with his left hand and

saluted smartly with his right. The President from his sad little nag acknowledged the salute.

This was the signal for the parade to begin.

General Couch wheeled and galloped off in the direction from which he'd come.

From out the distance came the sound of music.

Down the street marched the band, the first contingent of the parade. The men were splendid in red coats and blue caps, their brass instruments reflecting the few beams of light that filtered through the clouds.

Then came the soldiers, hundreds of them, in their blue uniforms, their kepis perched rakishly on their heads, their muskets on their shoulders.

"How I wish my Johnny could see this," thought Captain Eckert. He looked at the people all around him. There seemed to be thousands, all crowding in the square and cheering. They were the same kind of people who had been at the station the day before —farmers and clergymen and storekeepers.

Many men had lifted children to their shoulders so they could see better. The people of this district had seen these soldiers before—it was the Army of the Potomac come up from far away Virginia, many of the same men who had come here only a few months ago in July, to win the Battle of Gettysburg.

The people of Gettysburg shouted their welcome and their thanks to these citizens in uniform who had rescued their orchards and fields—their own little spot of the United States—from Lee's invading army.

Cheer after cheer went up as company after company passed by the President. The officers' clear commands rang out, and each line turned their heads as a man, to face their Commander-in-Chief in salute, as they swung by.

Behind the marching soldiers came another band. Then the cavalry. The horses took mincing little steps and strutted and fretted, keeping time to the music.

After the cavalry came the Knights Templars in full regalia; then the Knights of

Columbus, the feathers in their hats tossing gaily, and then the Odd Fellows in top hats, with broad blue ribbons across their frock coats. And after them, members of a half dozen other lodges and societies.

A mighty cheer went up when a group of veterans drove by in open victorias. Most of these were old soldiers of the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. A whisper ran through the crowd that there was even one man there who had fought in the War for Independence. The old fellows stood up as they passed by the President and saluted shakily, and Lincoln took off his hat and kept it off until the last carriage was gone.

Behind the veterans came another band, and then the artillery. The stumpy cannons were mounted on caissons, hooked on behind two-wheeled ammunition carts each drawn by four big, shiny horses with tossing manes and big shaggy feet. There were four men on every carriage—the driver and three artillerymen—they sat stiffly, with arms folded, eyes straight ahead, keeping their

balance as the big wheels bumped and skipped over the uneven street. They jerked their heads over their shoulders in salute as they went by the President, stiff as ramrods.

Behind the artillery marched the Color Guard. They carried seventeen State flags, the President's flag, and the Stars and Stripes.

The men in the crowd took off their hats, and many women wept when the Color Guard dipped the flags in salute, as they passed the Commander-in-Chief.

Lincoln and his staff fell in behind the Color Guard, joining the march to the cemetery.

But the parade wasn't over yet. There were four Fire Companies, each dragging a fine red engine. Behind the Fire Brigades came more marching men—fat politicians with walking sticks, leading citizens, bankers. Then came carriages—the elegant ladies' and gentlemen's carriages, which had lined the curbs. And farm wagons; then, Amishmen in their little black rigs and gigs and buggies and spring wagons, followed by four

big farm carts loaded with children, waving American flags. Last of all came the Germania Maennerchor, singing away for dear life. As the chorus went by, the crowd in the square fell in, some of them behind the parade, and some of them running along the pavement, trying to catch up with the first part of the procession so they could have good places at the cemetery.

John ran along a little way with the crowd out Baltimore Avenue. He wanted to get just one more glimpse of the President. He only had to run a little way before he overtook him.

The President was still bowing to the right and the left, taking off his hat as he bowed. But he didn't seem to have his mind on it. He'd slumped down on his horse as though he were thinking of other things.

John stopped short. In the excitement his own job had slipped his mind. It was up to him to get back to the train quick if Ed and the firemen were to get out to the cemetery in time. He turned up a side street and

once away from the crowd, started running as quickly as he could, in the opposite direction—toward the Wye.

The sound of the bands and the singing grew fainter and fainter. A light drizzle had started.

The Station Bell

John Eckert looked at his watch. There was still an hour to train time. His crew had got back to the Wye from the cemetery on the double, and had been hard at work cleaning up ever since. Now everything was shipshape; from the last brass spittoon in the rear car to the light on the head end of the engine, the whole train was polished and shining.

John made a final inspection. Satisfied, he told the crew to take time out for a short rest and a bit of supper. They carried their lunch pails over to the embankment and sat down.

For the first time since he'd been made captain, John went over and joined them. He didn't have a lunch basket of his own, but the boys were quick to offer him some from theirs. He sat quietly eating, listening while the men went over the events of the day.

"The best part of it all," said Ed, the engineer, "was when the parade came into the cemetery. I was right there in the road and the band began playing some sort of a funeral march, with muffled drums, very solemn, and the soldiers came behind taking long steps."

"But that was kind of mournful," said one of the brakemen.

"That's what I liked," said Ed. "It made me think what we was there for."

"And when the President came in behind the soldiers, riding so slow, with all those fine looking men on horseback behind him, the women all around me started crying, and I'll tell you there was many a man there besides me that had a lump in his throat."

"The music was all right," said the fireman. "All those men singing and that quartet from the Baptist Church—that was like religion."

"I go to the Baptist Church," said one of the brakemen. "That's the way they always sing. That Mr. Witherow that leads the choir there, he knows how to make it sound holy. And that Reverend from Washington, that gave that there invocation, was good, too."

"He took too long," said the man who didn't like the mournful music. "I got real fidgety, even though I could hear every word he said. But he didn't hold a candle to that there orator from Boston, Mr. Everett. Seems like he'd never stop."

"You don't know what you're sayin', Dan," said the engine driver. "That there oration of Mr. Everett's was somethin' you'll never hear the like of again. Why, he spoke for almost three hours without stopping, and you could hear every word he said."

"Well, it was too much for me," said Dan. "It was 'way over my head, and I wasn't the

only one neither. There was plenty in the crowd that had the fidgets, just like me. And with all those little boys runnin' around and rassling with each other on the grass, it looked like there was a good deal of commotion while he was talking."

"Well, even if you couldn't follow everything, you hadda respect him—a man who could keep right on talking for three hours," said Dave, the Gettysburger who went to the Baptist Church. "And he knew his stuff, too, all that he told about the Greeks and the Romans and the Egyptians and brought it right up to date. He was right, saying about how the Rebels oughta be punished too."

"He sure wasn't mealymouthed, even if he was a Reverend. And the people there must have agreed with him. Look at all the clapping they done when he was finished."

"How was Mr. Lincoln?" asked John.

"Well, it's kinda hard to say," said Ed. "First off, you couldn't hardly hear him, and then he was finished so quick. Everybody was surprised when he sat down, and before

they could get going with clapping, the cannon started up."

"There was some that clapped, just the same," said Dan. "You just couldn't hear them. Twenty-two rounds of ammunition make a sight of noise."

John finished eating and flicked a few crumbs off the front of his coat. He looked at his hands. They were pretty grimy. He took out his watch again and looked at it. There was still 47 minutes left.

"I think I'll go down to the depot and freshen up a bit," he said. He stood up. "You boys take it easy for a while." He put his watch away. "I'll be back in plenty of time to give the go-ahead. And thanks for the handout." Everybody laughed as John began walking down the tracks in the direction of the station.

As soon as he was out of earshot, the men started talking about him.

"Something sure happened to the Skipper," said one of the brakemen. "Did you see how

he pitched in today? Generally, he just stands around and gives orders."

"And giving us time off to go to the dedication," said Dan. "That wasn't like him."

"Listen to me, you tallow pot," said Ed. "I've been in this game a long time and I've seen many a conductor come and go. He's a fine fellow, Eckert. He's just young. He thinks he has to stand on his dignity. Maybe seeing Abe Lincoln all friendly and easy like he is, taught young John something. Maybe he's growing up."

John went swinging down the track not thinking of what was going on behind him. He was anxious to reach the depot. He was sure that a crowd would be collecting to see the train off, and he wanted to hear some more talk about what had happened at the cemetery.

Just as he had expected, there were a lot of people at the station. Some of them were going to be passengers on the down trip, but just as many more were there out of curiosity

to see the train pull out, and get a last look at the notables.

Swisher was there, still dressed up in his Sunday clothes, moving around and looking very important. And Weinbrenner was on duty in the telegraph office. John could see Kneckel leaning against the doorjamb of the waiting room. He hadn't even shaved or washed since before he came to work last evening.

Out on one end of the station platform a tall, rather stout young man was the center of a crowd. John joined them. They were all people that John knew well—Stallsmith, Strickhauser and Raffensberger, who often met the 12:15, and Segal and Britcher, farmers from farther up the line who must have driven over for the dedication.

"I tell you, Mr. Witherow," Stallsmith was saying to the young man, "your quartet was the best thing there this afternoon." Stallsmith was supposed to know a good deal about music—he sang in the choir of the Second Lutheran Church, and he was being

very generous by saying such nice things to Mr. Witherow about his Baptist quartet.

"Indeed, Mr. Stallsmith," said Witherow, in a booming bass, "we're gratified. We worked very hard to do justice to our rendition. Mr. Little sings a fine tenor. We went several evenings to the home of Miss Martha Gillespie, the soprano, in order to perfect our performance. We regarded it as a sacred duty to do our best in honor of the fallen heroes of our battle. The composition, too, I think, lent itself to our voices."

"That dirge of yours was a sight better than the piece of music the men sang, that 'Ode' as they called it."

Several of the men nodded their heads in agreement.

"Each rendition had its points," said Mr. Witherow modestly. "Both pieces were composed especially for this occasion. Mr. Percival, a literary man from York, Pennsylvania, created the words for our dirge," he said.

"But the tune was writ by a local, wasn't it?" said Mr. Britcher. Being a farmer, he

wasn't expected to know anything about music.

"The score was by Mr. Alfred Delaney, conductor of the Firemen's Band in York and a very fine musician, Mr. Britcher, may I say, though he is a local." Mr. Witherow was a little put out. Mr. Britcher's suggestion that a local man might not be as good as a big city man seemed a little insulting. "In my humble opinion," he went on, "this composition—this dirge—was quite the equal of the 'Ode in Honor of the Departed,' which the chorus from Baltimore sang."

"I've heard it said," said Stallsmith, "that the 'Ode' was written at the last moment. They offered the job to a couple of top poets, and even to that editor fellow, William Cullen Bryant who writ "Thanatopsis," but they all turned it down. And then this here Honorable Benjamin B. French, Superintendent of Public Buildings in Washington, stepped in and did it."

"What I want to know," said Mr. Britcher,

"how come Superintendent of Public Buildings gets to write songs?"

"Musically," said Mr. Witherow, putting Mr. Britcher in his place, "musically, it was a very satisfactory afternoon."

"Oh, everybody liked the music," said Mr. Britcher. "It wasn't because they didn't like it that they didn't clap. It just didn't seem the place to do that kind of thing."

"The occasion, and the nature of the music," said Mr. Witherow, "did not call for applause. The silence was a tribute in itself."

"You notice the President didn't get any applause either worth speaking about. Of course he only said a few words. And they weren't anything special."

A snicker ran through the group.

"Just the same the crowd kind of got beyond itself and wasn't able to stop from clapping when the Reverend Everett got through his oration."

"Sure. Everybody was glad when Everett got through with his long-winded talk," said

a new voice. It was Kneckel. He had drifted over during the discussion of the music, and now he spoke up suddenly.

"Yes, sir," he said. "People get mighty tired of standing around on their two feet for almost three hours, listening to all that high-falutin language. Maybe they just clapped from relief. They just had to do something to limber up. Mr. Lincoln now, he had enough sense—"

"What Old Abe said," Stallsmith broke in angrily, "was of no consequence. He didn't talk loud enough to be heard, with that funny voice of his, and what he says generally ain't something for people to remember. He wasn't called on to make an oration. The men in charge of the program knew better than to do that."

"Have it your own way," said Kneckel. "According to you, just 'cause a thing's long, it's got to be good. I tell you what the President said in those few minutes made more sense than all that high palaver of the great Mr. Everett. And I ain't the only one that

thinks so, neither. There's a couple of pretty high class newspaper fellers that thinks the same as me. But have it your own way. I ain't a gonna argue." And he drifted away again, and once more took up his post by the door.

Inside the waiting room, the newsmen were gathered around the stove. John went in to try and hear what they had to say.

As usual, they were pretty noisy. It was the photographers who were doing most of the talking. They were put out because they hadn't been able to get a single picture of the President.

"I set up my equipment," said Bachrach, "threw my black cloth over my head and looked into my camera. I thought to myself, I'll wait until he strikes a good pose, and then I'll get him. But I was hardly there when, by George, he sat down. I didn't have a chance."

"Well," said Gardner, "I didn't even get my camera set up and focused before he was gone. But I don't feel too badly. After all,

the President wasn't the orator of the day. He was just here to make a few remarks."

"My friends," the fiery Colonel Forney broke in, "I predict you will live to regret this day, and to curse yourself for having been so inexpeditious. Those few remarks that were made there will live forever in the annals of this nation. On this, I am willing to stake my journalistic reputation."

"Oh, come, come, Jack," said Ben: Perley Poore, patting his waistline. "The President's remarks were neat and to the point, but hardly great oratory."

"They were poetry," said Forney. He looked at the piece of paper which he had in his hand and began reading:—"'*conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.*' That's a happy phrase—"

"You Yankees may like it," interrupted a man, who spoke in an English sort of way, "but it's not what we call English—'dedicated to the proposition'—is that a refined phrase?"

Colonel Forney started to answer, but

the Britisher wasn't to be stopped. "I see you have the whole speech there, Colonel," he said. "I wasn't able to get it down. I'd like to copy your version. Yankee phraseology or no, I would like to forward it in its entirety to my paper in London. The English working man is very much interested in this homely President of yours. They've liked him ever since he made that Emancipation Proclamation and sent the note to Liverpool thanking the spinners there for sticking by the States, even if it meant putting them out of work. Let's see the copy."

"Well, under those circumstances, sir, I will be glad to aid you," said Colonel Forney handing him the paper. All the newspapermen crowded around trying to get copies.

"Whoever doesn't get it now," said Forney, "I'll give it to on the train going down. There'll be plenty of time. I'm proud to be the one to pass on these immortal words."

John looked at his watch. It was getting near train time. He called Swisher aside.

"It's almost time to ring the station bell," he said. "Do you know where the President is, and will he be able to hear it?"

"Weinbrenner here tells me that Lincoln had a regular reception at the Wills house after dinner. He's not one to let a chance like this go to mend his political fences."

"So he's at the Wills house," said John. "Then he'll hear the bell."

"No," said Swisher, "he ain't there now. He went over to the Lutheran Church, on the other side of the Square. Let me see," and he looked at his watch. "Service started at five-thirty. Must be just about sermon time. Mebbe we ought to hold the train till church is out."

"Listen, Mr. Swisher," said John. "It's my job to get this train started on time so we'll be down at Hanover Junction when the express comes to pick us up. Sermon or no sermon, that bell's going to ring when it's time for it to ring."

"Better look out," said Swisher. "Old Abe may not appreciate this. There's been a lot

of talk about his not being a churchman. I even heard tell that he's an atheist, that he doesn't believe in God. He won't thank you for bringing him out of church with everybody looking on."

The buzz of talk in the station had died down. Most of the crowd were listening to Forney as he continued slowly reading to the newspapermen around him the words which Lincoln had spoken and he had taken down:—

"That we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Forney stopped reading. "And that's the end of the speech," he said.

"You heard that, Swisher," said John. "That sounds to me like the words of a God-fearing man. And that part about government *by* the people—I figure that means each one of us has to do his job to keep this country

going the best he knows how." He took out his watch and studied it. "It's fifteen minutes to train time now, and I figure it's my job to run my train on schedule."

Swisher stared at the captain. He'd always laughed about John's being so fussy about his on-time record. He'd often joked with the captain about it. But he could see this was no moment for joking. For once, he didn't have anything to say.

"Mr. Swisher," said the captain, "I'm going up to the Wye, and you go up into that there tower. Five minutes before we get ready to pull in, we'll give you the whistle and you ring that bell. I intend to see that the President of the United States gets the chance to get back to Washington and do his job, by doing mine." He looked Swisher straight in the eye. "Remember this, Swisher," he said, "you're the Station Agent. But I'm the captain of this train, and I intend to make this run on time *as* scheduled."

He snapped his watch shut and added "That's orders."

And he walked out of the waiting room, across the platform, and up the track toward the waiting train.

The Watch

Everything went according to schedule. At 6:20 Ed blew his whistle, and the bell in the station began to ring. By the time the train pulled into the depot, the President and his party were coming down Carlisle Street and rounding the corner of the station building. The President was walking so fast that the fat politicians and the generals in their high boots behind him were having a hard time to keep up.

The official passengers for Washington were already on the platform when the train halted.

It was already dark, but even in the lamp-

light John thought that the President looked tired and anxious to get going. He was shaking hands and saying good-by to the people who had pressed around him, but he seemed to be in a hurry to get it over with.

John swung down on the platform with his watch in his hand. On the dot of 6:28 he gave the "All Aboard." As quick as he could, the President cut the hand-shaking short, climbed up the steps of the last car, paused just long enough on the rear platform to take off his hat and bow once more, and went inside.

The Marine Guard ran up to the baggage car on the double and clambered aboard. The French Minister handed his lady onto the train and followed her, as all the other passengers shouldered and pushed each other in their hurry to scramble up the steps. They just made it.

At exactly 6:30, Captain Eckert, on the lowest step of the second car, gave the engine driver the high ball with a lighted lantern.

Ed blew off steam. The crowd on the platform pushed back from the trainside. The engine bell began to ring. Sparks flew out of the big smokestack, and the wheels began to turn, slowly at first and then faster and faster, gathering speed as the train pulled out of Gettysburg—on time.

From where he stood, John could see a big, oversized man running down the track after them. He ran about half a block and then he gave up, stopped, and began mopping his face with a big handkerchief. John watched him until the train went around the curve. As a conductor, John was sorry he had left a passenger behind, but as a new-made Lincoln man he couldn't help hoping that it was one of those politicians whom he'd heard say such belittling things about the President. It wasn't his fault. After all, the fellow shouldn't have taken so much time shaking hands and making himself solid with the crowd. The President had managed to get there on time, so why shouldn't these hangers-on?

John wondered just how the President *had* managed.

He went inside the car. It was packed and jammed. There were about twice as many people there now as had come up with him the night before. Sure enough, they were talking about what happened in the church.

"Yes, sir," said a big man with mutton-chop whiskers. "I was sitting there right back of the President. We'd been there about half-an-hour singing and praying like good ones. Then the Reverend got up into the pulpit and settled himself back to deliver the sermon. It looked like it was going to be another long haul."

"You ought to be used to that," said another man. "Sitting in the House of Representatives the way you do."

"It's different in the House," said the congressman. "In the house you can sleep, or take a chaw of tobacco. You can even get up and walk around while the other Honorable gents speak. But I sat there on the platform this morning while the Honorable Everett

was speaking. I couldn't more than peek at my watch, and by golly, he spoke for more'n two hours without drawing a breath. I wasn't looking forward to another one like that."

"Well, what happened?" said another man. "You don't look too worn down."

"Just as the Reverend got himself wound up, outside, in town, a bell began to ring. At first I thought it was another church bell. I thought maybe some other parson was setting up a rival meeting. And then Mr. Wills, who was sitting next to the President, leaned over and said in a pretty loud whisper, 'Mr. President, that's the station bell. That means it's train time.' "

"Well, sir, you could see the whole congregation nodding. They knew all right what that bell meant. They knew that bell meant business."

"That was a fix. What did the President do?"

"Old Abe, he listened a moment and then he stood up. Everybody looked at him. Next, he spoke in that funny voice of his. Mostly

you can't hear him when you're right up close. But everybody in that church heard what he said."

"What was it?" several men asked.

"He said, 'Reverend, sir, I've been looking forward to hearing your sermon. But that bell, sir, recalls me to my other duties. The conduct of the war, sir, demands that I return to the nation's capital this evening. Evidently, it's departure time, so I'll have to make my excuses.' And then he looked all around and spoke to the congregation. 'Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your extreme courtesy. This is an occasion which I shall never forget.' And he walked down the aisle and out of the church. And the rest of us went right along with him. It was as quick a bit of thinking as I ever seen."

The crowd in the car roared with laughter.

"There'll be a lot of criticism," said one of the men in the group.

"Old Abe can take it," said the congressman. "He's used to it. And what he'll get about leaving the church won't be nothin'

next to what he'll get for what he said at the cemetery."

"There was a man there from Chicago, from some newspaper," said the other man. "He talked highfalutin. He said that it brought a blush of shame to his face to think that this was the man we had to point out to foreigners as our President. He said he was writing for his paper that the President's remarks were silly, flat and dishwatery."

John had heard enough of this kind of talk. He didn't like this crowd anyway, and he wondered how they got on his train—deadheads, he guessed they were, looking for a free ride. They didn't have a bit of respect for his nice clean car. They were sitting everywhere, their feet on the plush seats, and their heavy boots scarring up the polished wooden armrests. The ones that weren't chewing tobacco were smoking. It was strictly against regulations to use the weed inside a car—passengers were supposed to go out on the platform before they lighted up. Cleaning up after this bunch was going to

be a big job. There'd be mud and ashes and tobacco juice all over the floor.

They made him feel uneasy another way, too. Maybe they oughtn't to be on the train at all. Maybe some of them were Copperheads and troublemakers.

John went up into the baggage car to talk it over with the lieutenant of the Marines.

"This is 'way beyond my jurisdiction," said the lieutenant.

"Well, what do we do about it?" said Captain Eckert. "We don't want any trouble with the President on board."

The lieutenant thought a minute.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," he said. "I'll leave my sergeant in charge here. Let's you and me go back to the President's car, and talk to Mr. Benjamin B. French. He's in charge of the arrangements. He's the Marshal of the Parade. Or maybe Mr. Ward Lamon, the President's friend. They've got a Pinkerton man aboard. Mr. French'll know about it and we can ask him what to do."

They pushed their way back through the

coach to the front platform of the President's car.

Two men were standing by the door. One was Mr. French. The second was even broader than Mr. French but not as tall. He was standing with his feet planted squarely apart and he had his hands clasped behind him. He had on a brown, roundabout jacket, a flowing tie, and a pork pie hat.

"Mr. French, sir," said the lieutenant saluting. "The captain here and I have a problem, a problem of security."

The Honorable Benjamin removed the long cigar from between his lips and spat neatly out over the rail. Not a single drop fell on the platform.

"Well, Lieutenant," he said, "you've come to the right one. This here is Mr. Allan Pinkerton. And security's his job."

"All right, Captain," said the most famous detective of them all, briskly. "What's up?"

"It's the deadheads," said John. "There's twice as many riding this train as I had coming up."

"I figured as much," said Pinkerton, stroking his bushy mustache. "Whenever there's anything for nothing to be got, you got to count on free loaders. I got the President up here in this car, and there ain't anybody in there with him except people I know."

Through the glass door over Pinkerton's shoulder, John could see the President sitting way at the rear of the car. He was lying back in his chair, and he had a handkerchief spread out over his face.

"How much longer till we get to the Junction, Captain?" asked Pinkerton.

"We just passed Hanover," said John. "That's eleven minutes from the Junction." He didn't have to stop and think about that. He made that run four times every day of his life.

"Eleven minutes," said Pinkerton, "that's good. Now when we get to the Junction, Captain, what's the arrangement? Does the express train wait for us, or do we wait for it?"

"The express pulls in four minutes before

us," said John. "This gives them a chance to get set for the switching operation."

"And are we on time?" asked the detective.

"We are, sir," said John, proudly.

"Good," said Pinkerton. "Now, Lieutenant, just to be on the safe side, you put a couple of men at the door of every car on this train. When we get to the Junction, they're not to let anybody off or on till we get the President over onto the main tracks and onto the express. Then I'll give you the word and you let 'em off. Maybe we can lose some of them that way."

"You're gonna have a time with the President," said Mr. French. "He'll want to get out and walk around and talk with the people. That's his way, you know."

"That's your job, Mr. French," said Pinkerton. "You go in there and see whether you can persuade him not to move about but go straight to the train. The captain, the lieutenant and I'll look after the rest of it, eh, Captain?"

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Pinkerton," said John.

He was terribly disappointed. He'd been thinking about shaking Lincoln's hand again. It would mean something different to him now than it had the evening before when he hadn't understood so well what it meant to be President of the United States. But he was the people and this was his government, and it was his job to do his part.

There wasn't a single hitch. The big express was standing waiting on the other side of the platform, panting to go, when the President's train pulled up on the Hanover Branch tracks. John swung off and signaled the "Slow Down" and "Stop."

All went well. The operations at Hanover Junction were completed just as Pinkerton wished.

The President, with only Mr. Nicolay and Mr. French, came out of his car, crossed the platform and got into the waiting Northern Central Express. Then the rest of the passengers followed in a rush.

Captain McIntosh got up on the step ready to give the engineer the "Go Ahead."

John looked around at the people who were watching. It was late and so there weren't many. But right over by the Hanover Branch depot, under the sign that said "Hanover Junction," there was Mrs. Eckert with Johnny.

Captain Eckert waved. She set the child down and the little boy began running toward him.

"Daddy! Daddy!" he called. John stooped down to catch him in his arms.

As he set the child on his shoulder and straightened up, he heard someone speak his name.

"Captain—Captain Eckert!"

John turned. There, right beside him, stood the President. Somehow he'd managed to get away from Pinkerton.

Mr. Lincoln put his hand on Johnny's head.

"You got a fine father, boy," he said. "I hope you'll give him as much pleasure as my little Tadpole gives me."

OVER JUNCTION

"I didn't want to go off without thanking you, Captain," he went on, "for a fine run. You know, I used to be a railroad man myself, out on the Illinois Central, and I know the value of a schedule when it ought to be kept."

He took out his watch.

"Mr. Conductor," he said, "thank you for returning us safely." He held out his watch. "This chronometer of mine keeps pretty good time and it says we made the run on time. How about checking?"

While the President was speaking, John put his hand in his vest pocket. He did this a dozen times a day. It was second nature to him. But all flustered the way he was, with Johnny in his arms, and with the President standing there, he fumbled. Before he knew it, the precious watch was lying at his feet.

Swiftly the President unhooked his own watch from its chain and pressed it in John's hand.

"Here," he said, "Captain Eckert. Take this watch of mine. May God bless you, may you live long and prosper. Good-by."

And he walked away, crossed the platform, and climbed quickly into the waiting train.

Just as quickly, the Northern Central captain gave the high ball, and the train pulled out.

"Look, Johnny," said Captain Eckert. "Look at that train. There she goes with the President on board. Maybe neither of us'll ever see him again, but you must never forget that it was your father that took Mr. Lincoln to Gettysburg and brought him back safe, and on time, and we'll always have this watch to remember him by."

The Gettysburg Address

There are five different copies of the Gettysburg Address, each one a little different from the other, and each written in Mr. Lincoln's own hand. Here is the Address as we usually hear it.

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives, that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground.

The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here, have, thus far, so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that, government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

* * *

For twenty-five years this statement has been preserved at Baltimore, Maryland, in Western Maryland Railway Company's files.

Statement of Jacob Grant Eckert

I was born at Hanover, Pa. My parents were John Eckert and Adeline Eckert.

My father was a railroad conductor on the Hanover Branch Railroad, which afterwards become Hanover Junction, Hanover & Gettysburg Railroad, and is now a part of the Western Maryland system.

My father was conductor of the train which took President Lincoln from Hanover Junction to Gettysburg on November 18th and 19th, 1863, when he made his famous memorial address at Gettysburg. My father has

frequently told me about this occasion. The presidential party was small and did not travel in a private car. They transferred from the Northern Central at Hanover Junction to a special Hanover Branch train. The special train waited (overnight) at Gettysburg for President Lincoln and his party and brought them back to Hanover Junction, where they were turned over to the Northern Central.

It was at Hanover Junction on the return trip that President Lincoln presented my father with a silver watch and said to him: "Mr. Conductor, I thank you for returning us safely"; he then handed my father the watch and said: "May God bless you, may you live long and prosper, good-bye," and walked away.

This information was, of course, passed on to me by my father.

(signature) J. G. Eckert

Subscribed and sworn to before me,
this 7th day of September 1929.
(s) G. I. Charlton
(SEAL) Notary Public

* * *

With the help of officials of the Company, the author has woven the incident into a story.

Repeated trips to Gettysburg, to see the house where Lincoln stayed, the railroad station with its old bell, to hear the tales of Lincoln which almost every Gettysburgian has to tell—these furnished much of the background of this book. And the newspapers of the day, old timetables, the official program of the parade, the copies of the music that was heard, together with photographs of the McClelland House, the trains that were running, the Diamond,

York and Baltimore Streets, and many others—photographs that are to be found for the most part in private collections—all these helped the writer to give a reasonably truthful picture of what happened when Lincoln went to Gettysburg.

So part of this book is history, part hearsay, and part just plain story telling—fiction.

As to the people—the historical characters really lived and were there. But though many of the others have the kind of names still to be found in an Adams County directory, "any resemblance to any person living or dead is merely coincidental," as a lawyer would say, which means these characters were invented by the writer for the purposes of this book.

The author wishes to thank Mr. Eugene S. Williams, Chairman of the Board of Western Maryland Railway Company, Mr. G. R. Haworth, Vice President in Charge of Operations, and Mr. Edward M. Killough, Valuation Engineer, and author of "History of Western Maryland Railway Company," for reading the manuscript before publication. And to Mr. Henry Scharf, owner of the Hotel Gettsyburg, Dr. J. Walter Coleman of the National Park Service, and Dr. Robert Fortenbaugh of Gettysburg College, for introducing the writer to so much Gettysburg lore. And thanks to Mrs. Floyd King and to Mr. N. A. Meligakes and to many other Gettysburg friends.

A word of appreciation is due Vice President C. R. Zarfoss of Western Maryland Railway, who

originally brought the story of the conductor's watch to my notice.

Helpful in many ways were Lillian Bragdon, my understanding editor; Nannine Joseph, my long-suffering agent; Catherine Krimm of Western Maryland Railway Company, Raymond Sovey, who dug up so much material, and Lillian Gainsburgh, the always dependable.

Younger readers will enjoy hearing this story read to them. Ten-year-olds can read it for themselves.

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